

Morning Worship

Bethesda Lutheran Church - 8:30 AM

Immanuel Lutheran Church - 11:00 AM

December 8, 2024

Second Sunday of Advent

Before we begin our worship this morning, I acknowledge that Bethesda Lutheran Church/Immanuel Lutheran Church sits on the traditional grounds of the Anishinaabe People, and we honor their elders both past and present. Their presence is imbued in the lands and waters surrounding us. We nurture our relationships with our indigenous neighbors, and the shared responsibilities to their homeland where we all reside today.

HOLY COMMUNION

Prelude

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
alive in the world,
reviving creation,
arriving soon.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,

we confess that we have sinned.

We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.

We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might,

we confess that we have sinned.

We have turned away from our neighbors.

We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,

we confess that we have sinned.

We plead: come to us.

Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth:

it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,

in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.

By the power of the Holy Spirit,

receive the grace and forgiveness of God

through † Christ Jesus,

whose day draws near.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn: ELW #266 “All Earth Is Hopeful”

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.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

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**

Advent Wreath Lighting

Bethesda ELW #240 *“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah” vv. 1&2*
Immanuel *“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”*

O comforter, speak tenderly of peace;

Cry words of promise and release.

You level hills and make valleys plain:

Reveal your glory, end our pain.

Rejoice! rejoice! Take heart and do not fear;

God’s chosen one, Immanuel, draws near.

(Alternative lyrics by Emmy Kegler)

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. **Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4

God announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means “my messenger”) will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God’s people, as silver and gold are refined.

¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Luke 1:68-79

Refrain: In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us. (Lk. 1:78)

⁶⁸ Blessed are you, Lord, the | God of Israel,
you have come to your people and | set them free.

⁶⁹ **You have raised up for us a | mighty Savior,
born of the house of your | servant David. R**

⁷⁰ Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save
us | from our enemies,

⁷¹ **from the hands of | all who hate us,**

⁷² to show mercy | to our forebears,
and to remember your | holy covenant.

⁷³ **This was the oath you swore to our | father Abraham:**

⁷⁴ to set us free from the hands of our | enemies,
free to worship you | without fear,
⁷⁵ **holy and righteous before you, all the days | of our life. R**
⁷⁶ And you, child, shall be called the prophet of | the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to pre- | pare the way,
⁷⁷ **to give God's people knowledge | of salvation
by the forgiveness | of their sins.**
⁷⁸ In the tender compassion | of our God
the dawn from on high shall | break upon us,
⁷⁹ **to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the
shad- | ow of death,
and to guide our feet into the | way of peace. R**

Second Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.

³ I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴ constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵ because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰ to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹ having produced the harvest of

righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.

Gospel Acclamation

Thy word

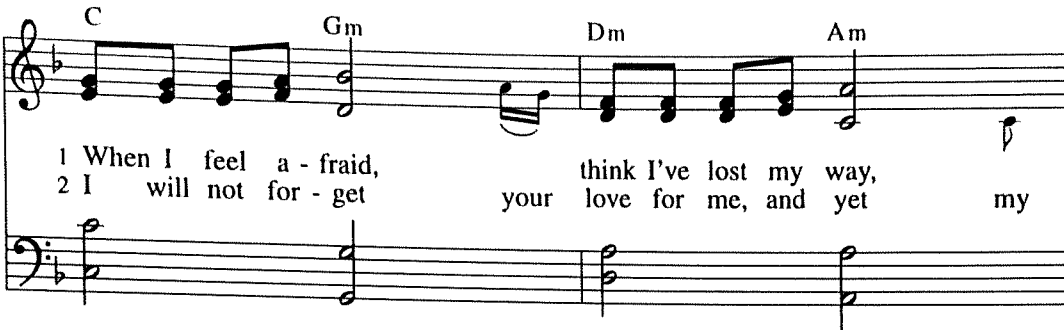
Refrain

F C⁷ F B \flat C⁷ F B \flat F



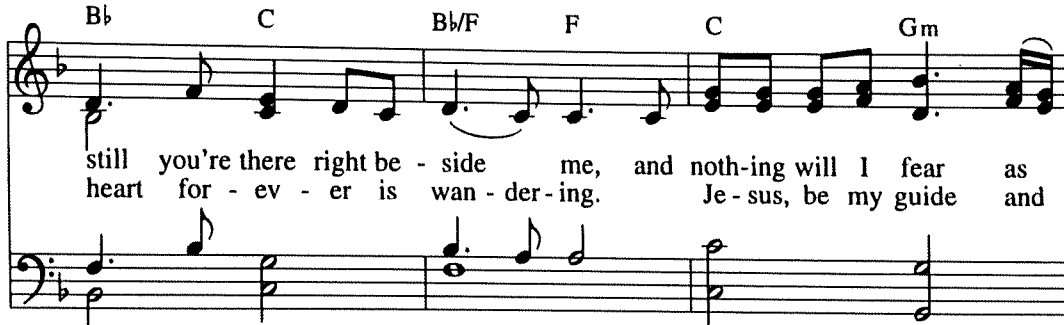
Thy word is a lamp un-to my feet and a light un-to my path.

C Gm Dm Am



1 When I feel a - fraid, think I've lost my way,
2 I will not for - get your love for me, and yet my

B \flat C B \flat /F F C Gm



still you're there right be - side me, and noth - ing will I fear as
heart for - ev - er is wan - der - ing. Je - sus, be my guide and

Dm Am B \flat C Dm D A/C \sharp Csus C⁷ *Refrain*



long as you are near. Please be near me to the end.
hold me to your side, and I will love you to the end.

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 3rd chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by “repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you O Christ.

Reflection: Pastor Connie Monson

Hymn of the Day: ELW #785 “*When Peace like a River*”

Message: Jim Pete

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.

I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a little town and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world.

I believe in the one for whom the crowded inn could find no room, but who transformed the place by his very presence.

I believe in the one who the rulers of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand; whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons with hungry hearts.

I believe in the one whose cradle was a mother's arms, who looked at persons and made them see what God's love saw in them, who by love brought sinners back to purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.

I confess my ever-lasting need of God: The need of forgiveness for my selfishness and greed, the need of new life for empty souls, the need of love for hearts grown cold.

I believe in God who gives us the best of himself.

I believe in Jesus, the Son of God, born in Bethlehem this night, for me and for the world.

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

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.

Refining God, move through your church. Root out practices that harm your people, and kindle a fire for sharing the gospel among bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, transform your creation. Steer us from habits that harm what you have made, and guide us in practices that preserve and restore creatures and habitats. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Ruling God, teach the nations your ways. Strengthen organizations and communities that broker peace and care for refugees, immigrants, and all caught in the center of conflict (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Rescuing God, restore your people who are in any need. Heal all who are suffering (*especially*). Provide comfort and strength, and nurture sustained wholeness for the future. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Reforming God, fill this congregation with your presence. Enrich our seasonal preparations, and bless the efforts by worship committees, music ensembles, staff, clergy, and lay leaders as they work in the weeks ahead. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Other intercessions: You know the need for healing, comfort, help or resolution for those we name before you today: Myrna & Richard Northrop, Kermit Delmain, Ed DePerry, Lorayne Reedy, Lois Osterberg, Courtney Byerhof, Bill Bodner, Chuck & Marcia Perry, Sharon Johnson, Colleen Nozal, Chick Anderson, Kelli Ann Clapero, Rhiannon Tourdot, Holly Tourdot, Bennett Anderson, Jennifer Schlack, Karen Novachek, Stacey Uhlman, John Frederick, Bill Ferraro, Casey French, the family of Ruthann Compton, Mary Thomas, Don Hyde, Donnie Anderson, Paul Ehlers, and the family of Cathy Paavola. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reassuring God, we remember those who have died and rest in you. Guide us in deep gratitude for their life, and allow us to learn from their faithful witness. 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

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

(Share a sign of God's peace with one another.)

Offering

Offering Prayer

Creator God,

you made the whole world,

even the farthest stars,

and you draw near to feed us.

We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.

Strengthen us with this food

that we may live in expectation

for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also 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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and

might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the

high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

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:

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

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

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

The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Prayer after Communion

Generous God,
we thank you for the gift of life,
for the bread of salvation.
We thank you for coming among us,
for leading us into peace.
We thank you for showering us with mercy,
for sending us into the world.
Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us
as we feed the hungry in your name. **Amen.**

Communion Hymn: ELW #253 “He Came Down”

Announcements:

Sunday AA 7:00 at Immanuel; Bethesda Bible Study 10 am
Monday South Shore Quilters 9:00; Book study on Zoom 1:00
Tuesday Brunch Bunch 10:00; Acts Bible Study on Zoom, 1:00;
John Thiel’s birthday
Wednesday South Shore Quilters 9:00; Bethesda Gather 9:30 am
Thursday Immanuel Painters 10:00; Kim Glau’s birthday
Friday ROMEOs 8:00 & Knit Wits 1:00 at Immanuel; Linda
Barnes’s birthday

Blessing

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

Amen.

Sending Hymn: ELW #256 “Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

Thanks be to God!

Reconciling in Christ Statement

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

We welcome YOU to Bethesda and Immanuel to participate fully in our congregational life. You who may have experienced exclusion, injustice or racial inequity; You who are young, old, rich, poor; You of all abilities; You from all nations and ethnic backgrounds; You of all sexual orientations, gender identities or gender expression.

We are committed to racial equity, economic equity, gender equity, sexual equity. We are committed to learn, celebrate, advocate and welcome everyone through a series of forums and educational opportunities. May we grow in acceptance and become a voice for inclusion, equity and justice.

No matter where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.