





## Welcome to worship at Spirit of Christ!

We are a member congregation of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. We gather here as the living body of Jesus Christ to be nourished and empowered by the Holy Spirit in what we call the “Means of Grace” — God’s gifts of Word and Sacrament. Through these Means of Grace, we receive the promise of the Gospel: that in the Spirit of Christ God forgives us, remakes us, and reigns in us. May the Lord bless your worship today!

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Advent Midweek Worship

December 13, 2023

### Advent Litany

- L** YHWH proclaimed through the prophet Isaiah a word of power to the people:
- C** **“Be stunned and amazed, blind yourselves and be sightless.”**
- L** The people will “be drunk, but not from wine; stagger, but not from beer.”  
This is because:
- C** **“The LORD has brought over you a deep sleep.”**
- L** He has “sealed the eyes of the prophets and covered the heads of the seers.”  
*(Isa. 29:9-10)* However, things will change.
- C** **“In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll,**
- L** and out of gloom and darkness,
- C** **the eyes of the blind will see.”** *(Isa. 29:18)*

### Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing

LSB 584

- 1 **Faith and truth and life bestowing,  
Open now the Scriptures, Lord,  
Seed to life eternal sowing,  
Scattered on the wind abroad.  
Let not hearts, your Word receiving,  
Like a barren field be found,  
Choked with thorns and unbelieving,  
Shallow earth or stony ground.**
- 2 **May the Spirit’s pow’r unceasing  
Bring to life the hidden grain,  
Daily in our hearts increasing,  
Bearing fruit that shall remain.  
So in Scripture, song, and story,  
Savior, may your voice be heard.  
Till our eyes behold your glory  
Give us ears to hear your Word.**

## Confession and Forgiveness

- P** We gather to prepare our hearts for the Lord of Advent: the little Messiah who comes into the world and into our hearts. He tells us to be watchful for his coming, and he himself prepares us. His Spirit abides in us so that our hearts may be cleansed by his power. Trusting in the mercy of his judgment, we therefore confess our sin to the Lord.

*We take time in silence to confess our personal and communal sin before God, confident that we will receive forgiveness.*

- P** Lord, have mercy on us;  
**C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
**P** Christ, have mercy on us;  
**C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
**P** Lord, have mercy on us;  
**C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
**P** Hear the Good News which the angels proclaimed: Jesus, the Messiah, is the son of our loving God and he takes away the sin of the world and our fear. The message of the prophets is fulfilled in his coming. The Good News of Christmas is that God's child has come to live among us to save us from sin and fear.  
**C** **Amen**

## Advent Versicles

- P** The Spirit and the Church cry out:  
**C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
**P** All those who await his appearance pray:  
**C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
**P** The whole creation pleads:  
**C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**

## Prayer

- P** Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before you, O Lord, and let your loving-kindness descend on us that, with purified minds, we may sing your praises with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host and may glorify you forever.  
**C** **Amen.**

## Holy Gospel

*Mark 4:9-13*

- P** The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the fourth chapter.  
**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>9</sup>Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

<sup>10</sup>When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. <sup>11</sup>He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables <sup>12</sup>so that,

“they may be ever seeing but never perceiving,  
and ever hearing but never understanding;  
otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!”

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to you, O Christ.

## Second Reading

*Isaiah 6:1-13*

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. <sup>3</sup> And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

<sup>4</sup> At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

<sup>5</sup> “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

<sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

<sup>8</sup> Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

<sup>9</sup> He said, “Go and tell this people:

“Be ever hearing, but never understanding;  
be ever seeing, but never perceiving.”

<sup>10</sup> Make the heart of this people calloused;  
make their ears dull  
and close their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,  
hear with their ears,  
understand with their hearts,  
and turn and be healed.”

<sup>11</sup> Then I said, “For how long, Lord?”

And he answered:

“Until the cities lie ruined  
and without inhabitant,  
until the houses are left deserted  
and the fields ruined and ravaged,

<sup>12</sup> until the LORD has sent everyone far away  
and the land is utterly forsaken.

<sup>13</sup> And though a tenth remains in the land,  
it will again be laid waste.

But as the terebinth and oak

leave stumps when they are cut down,  
so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.”

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Advent Litany

**L** YHWH commanded the prophet Isaiah to “say to those with fearful hearts:

**C** Be strong, do not fear; your God will come.

**L** he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution —

**C** he will come to save (us).

**L** Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,

**C** and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

**L** Then will the lame leap like a deer,

**C** and the mute tongue for joy.” (*Isa. 35:4-6a*)

## Holy Gospel

*Matthew 13:9-17*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the thirteenth chapter.

**C** Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>9</sup>Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

<sup>10</sup>The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?”

<sup>11</sup>He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. <sup>12</sup>Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. <sup>13</sup>This is why I speak to them in parables:

“Though seeing, they do not see;

though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

<sup>14</sup>In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

“You will be ever hearing but never understanding;

you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

<sup>15</sup>For this people’s heart has become calloused;

they hardly hear with their ears,

and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,

hear with their ears,

understand with their hearts

and turn, and I would heal them.’

<sup>16</sup>But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they

hear. <sup>17</sup>For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to you, O Christ.

## Preach You the Word

*LSB 586 (tune 344)*

**1** Preach you the Word and plant it home  
To men who like or like it not,

The Word that shall endure and stand  
When flow'rs and men shall be forgot.

- 2 We know how hard, O Lord, the task  
Your servant bade us undertake:  
To preach your Word and never ask  
What prideful profit it may make.
- 3 The sower sows; his reckless love  
Scatters abroad the goodly seed,  
Intent alone that all may have  
The wholesome loaves that all men need.
- 4 Though some be snatched and some be scorched  
And some be choked and matted flat,  
The sower sows; his heart cries out,  
“Oh, what of that, and what of that?”
- 5 Of all his scattered plenteousness  
One-fourth waves ripe on hill and flat,  
And bears a harvest hundredfold:  
“Ah, what of that, Lord, what of that!”
- 6 Preach you the Word and plant it home  
And never faint; the Harvest Lord  
Who gave the sower seed to sow  
Will watch and tend his planted Word.

## Sermon

### Presentation of Offering

- P** Let us pray. Lord of Advent,  
**C** Accept the offerings we bring this day, the work of our hands, the gifts of our labor, our lives to serve you. Gladden our hearts as we watch for your coming and help us to share that gladness with all. Amen.

### Advent Litany

- L** YHWH spoke to the people through the prophet Isaiah:  
**C** “Do not be afraid, for I am with you;  
**L** I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west.  
**C** I will say to the north, ‘give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’  
**L** Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth - everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.  
**C** Lead out those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf.” (*Isa. 43:5-8*)

## Litany for Christ's Coming

- P** As the days of Advent hasten on and we draw nearer to the day of Christ's coming, let us pray with fervent hearts for the needs of the world:
- C** **Come, Lord Jesus, and do not tarry.**
- P** Lord Christ, in joy and anticipation we await your coming.
- C** **Come now and illumine the whole universe.**
- P** All creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.
- C** **Come soon, and save those who wait in darkness.**
- P** The suffering and the poor look to you for their hope.
- C** **Come and raise us to glory in your presence.**
- P** The troubled and oppressed have nowhere to turn but to you.
- C** **Come quickly and banish the powers of evil and darkness around us.**
- P** The sick and weary, the dying, and the faint-hearted cry out in their despair.
- C** **Come and bring us eternal wholeness and health.**
- P** Even the martyrs and the blessed dead make their plea, "O Lord, how long?"
- C** **Come now and give us eternal life.**
- P** The Spirit and the Church cry out:
- C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** All those who await your appearance pray:
- C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** The whole creation pleads:
- C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** O God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness.
- C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** Harken to the prayers of your servants, Lord Jesus. By the sign of the manger of Bethlehem, give us hope in the promise of your return. Come quickly, Lord, and bring us to the joys of the resurrection, where we will praise you with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever.
- C** **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

*LSB 251*

## *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

*LSB 802*

- 1 Immortal, invisible,  
God only wise,  
In light inaccessible  
hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious,  
the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious,  
Thy great name we praise.

2    **Unresting, unhasting,  
and silent as light,  
Nor wanting, nor wasting,  
Thou rulest in might;  
Thy justice like mountains  
high soaring above  
Thy clouds which are fountains  
of goodness and love.**

3    **To all life thou givest—  
to both great and small—  
In all life thou livest,  
the true Life of all;  
We blossom and flourish  
as leaves on the tree  
And wither and perish—  
but naught changes thee.**

4    **Great Father of glory,  
pure Father of light,  
Thine angels adore thee,  
all veiling their sight;  
All laud we would render:  
O help us to see  
'Tis only the splendor  
of light that hides thee.**

### **Collect For Peace**

**P** 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, you shower your people with the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and provide a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. We will greatly rejoice in the Lord for the sake of the one who brought righteousness to life, Jesus Christ our salvation.

**C** Amen.

### **Advent Benediction**

**P** May God be with you as you keep watch for the One whose Advent is promised.

**C** Amen.

**P** May God embolden your witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way.

**C** Amen.

**P** May you be found ready and alert at Christ's return, at peace in body, mind and spirit, and doing his will.

**C** Amen.

**P** And may God almighty, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## **Sending**

**P** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God!**







**SPIRIT<sup>of</sup> CHRIST**  
Lutheran Church

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Our Mission: To live in love for God and one another reaching out to all people, proclaiming and sharing the love of Christ.

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