



ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Mission

Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known



DECEMBER 1, 2024

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10:30 AM SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, the advent of Christ in word and supper, and his second coming in glory to all people.

GATHERING

Bold responses are spoken by the congregation.

Prelude

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

15th century German Carol

Setting for cello and organ by Michael Bedford

Please stand as able.

Processional Hymn

“Hark, the Glad Sound!” ELW 239

CHESTERFIELD

1. Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long;
let ev’ry heart prepare a throne and ev’ry voice a song.
2. He comes the pris’ners to release, in Satan’s bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.
3. He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace to enrich the humble poor.
4. Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace, your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav’n’s eternal arches ring with your beloved name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751; Music: Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

Please be seated.

Welcome

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is
marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
alive in the world,
reviving creation,
a light to the nations.

Amen.

The congregation may kneel or sit for the Confession. Silence is kept for reflection.

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

Gracious God,
we confess 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 and love to birth in us again.

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.

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.

Please stand as able.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

As the pastor lights the Advent wreath, verse one of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is sung.

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

WORD

First Reading

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Meg Fielding, lector

¹⁴The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The LORD is our righteousness.”

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

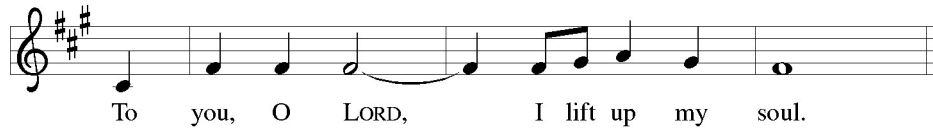
Psalm 25:1-10

Nick Matherly, Nick Hanewinkel, cantors

Psalm 25:1 (Carolyn Jennings) from *Psalter for Worship Year C*; © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

The Psalm printed below (the NRSV) may be different than the translation sung by the cantors.

As you listen to the psalm, please meditate on how different translations draw us more deeply into God’s word, enriching its meaning.



¹To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. ²O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me. ³Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. ⁴Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. ⁵Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. ⁶Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. ⁷Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness’ sake, O LORD! ⁸Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. ⁹He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. ¹⁰All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Meg Fielding, lector

⁹How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. ¹¹Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

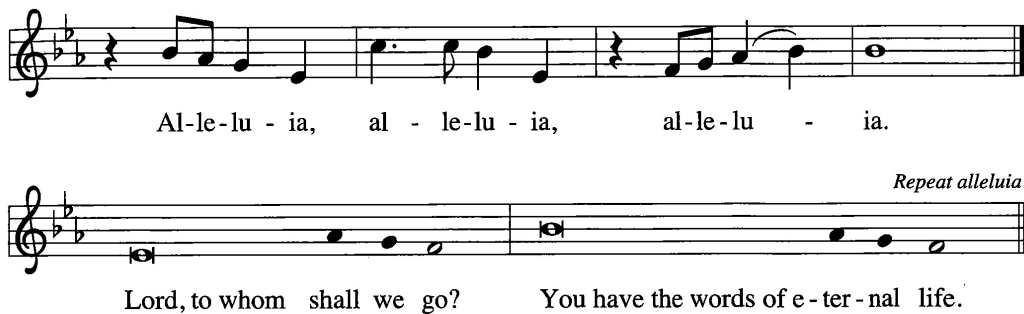
The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Please stand as able.

Gospel Acclamation

“Alleluia, Lord, to Whom Shall We Go” from *ACS Holy Communion Setting Twelve*



The Holy Gospel Luke 21:25-36

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 21st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” ²⁹Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³⁴“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Sermon

“Watch, be alert and pray”

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

Please stand as able.

Hymn of the Day

“Come Now, O Prince of Peace” ELW 247

OSOSO

Text: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope; Music: Geonyong Lee, T&M: © Geonyong Lee

1. Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
2. Come now, O God of love, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
3. Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.
4. Come, Hope of unity, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.

Please be seated.

The Apostles' Creed

Together, let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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

Lisa Barnette, prayer assistant

The congregation may kneel or sit for the prayers.

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 of righteousness, your people live in hopeful expectation of your coming. Fill your church with renewed passion for our shared mission, and deepen our relationships with other Christians and other faith traditions in our local community and across the world. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Gracious Lord, our lives are infinitely enriched every day when we are grateful for our existence and for everything you have provided to us for which we give thanks with heartfelt intention. The cycle of life continues as long as we have balance and harmony with each other and all living things as God's instructions to us. Lead us always in your ways in love and faithfulness as stewards of your creation. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God of the nations, your reign extends over all principalities and powers. Give leaders and all in authority hearts for justice and peace. Encourage efforts to enact policies that benefit the common good. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Lord of promises, through all ages there have been worldly conflicts and challenges that seem too difficult to have any resolutions. As Christians, we have been taught to wait and be prepared for the coming of Christ. Through our love of Christ, we look forward with hope to bring justice and righteousness to this hurting world. Send the promised signs into our lives to awaken us to the needed work and service that is ahead in our church, our communities, our nation and all nations in the world. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God of community, your Spirit holds us together. Sustain our care for one another, the sick, and the dying. Grant healing to members of our wider church family whom we remember before you: Ross Boheler, Betty Denison, Charlene Oppermann, Tom Sehorn, Jackie Ellington, Susan G., Ron and Nancy Stepp, Elaine Ketner Sherman, Mark Thornton, Patty Allen, Jarrod Braunschweiger, Julie Dornberger, Grey Hamilton, Jettie Leslie, Angie Blackwelder Malone, Norma Alexander, Laura Elliott, Gene Ellington, Ken Foust, Tanner Grant, Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Danyne Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa Coburn, Ben Watson, Ingrid Keiris, Shirley Larson, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Bill

Schwartz, Sergei Kobiakov, Arlene Fielding, Oakley Coburn, David Kutscher, Danielle Clausen, Rachel Fulp, Joseph Tolbert, and Jay Harbinson. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Encouraging Lord, help us navigate through the times in our lives when confidence is weak and the tasks ahead are daunting. Give us support and encouragement to not dwell on fear of the unknown. We shall be comforted in knowing that your loving kindness is always with us when we need it the most. We call on the Lord to uplift us in the certainty that his love endures forever. 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

(Please stand as able, sharing the peace of the risen Christ.)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

Please be seated.

OFFERING

(Offerings for the mission of the church are gathered by the ushers.)

Anthem

“An Advent Card”

Jody W. Lindh

All the earth is waiting for the birth of God's Son, soon the celebrating will bring honor to the Holy One. Sing with joy your carols here, soon the Christ Child will appear! How do we wait? How do we get ready for the coming of God's Son? How do we wait? How do we get ready for the birth of the Holy One? Be ready, be strong keep awake, it won't be long! Be patient, always pray, do what is good, prepare the way!

Please stand as able.

Offertory

(The offering is brought forward by the ushers)

“Tidings of Comfort and Joy” stanza one, from *Light the Candle*

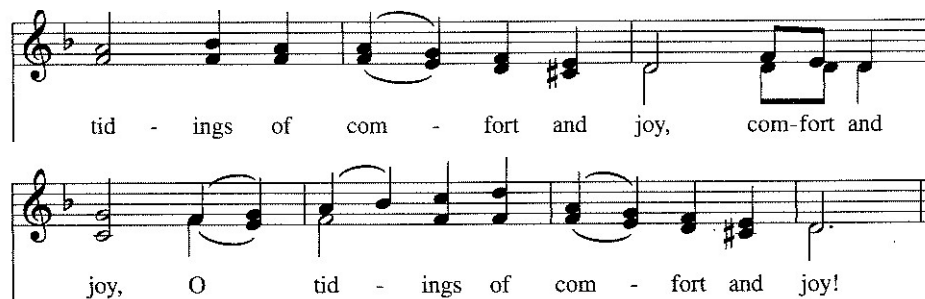
Traditional English Carol

Setting for choir and congregation by Michael Burkhardt

Unison:

1. I - sai - ah, proph - et, seer of old, re - spond-ing to God's
call, pro - claimed the com - ing of the Lord to
peo - ple, great and small. Now on this day we
hear God's word: de - clare good news to all!

O



Offering Prayer

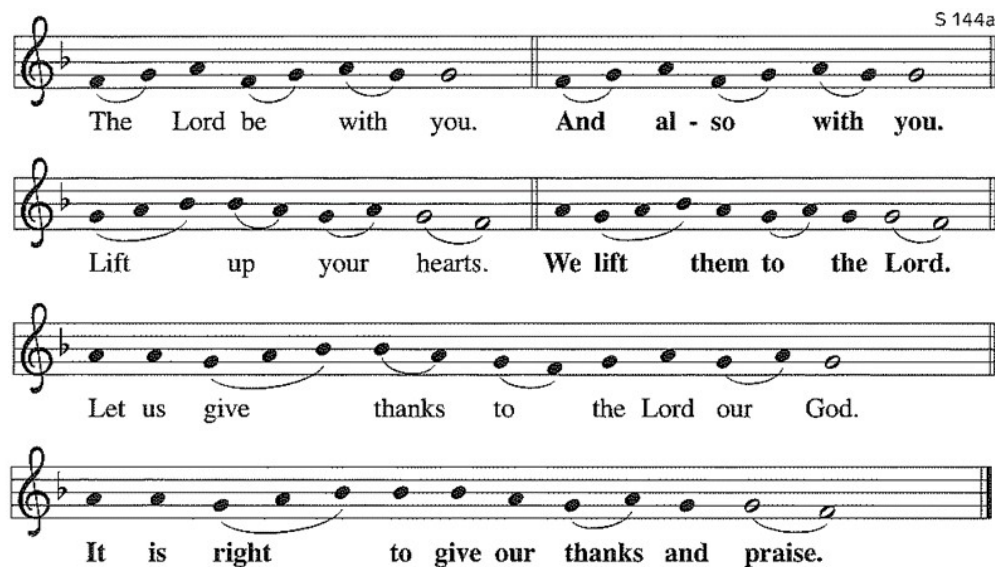
Let us pray. Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us with your grace. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this holy food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

Holy Communion Setting Three

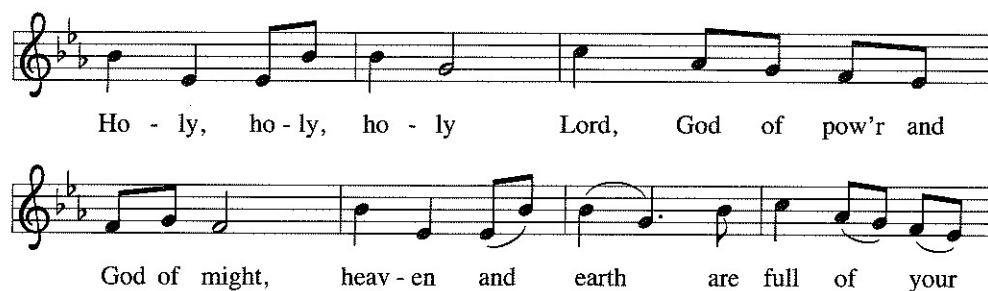


Proper Preface

Sanctus

“Holy, Holy, Holy” from *All Creation Sings*

Holy Communion Setting Twelve





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

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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

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

Please be seated.

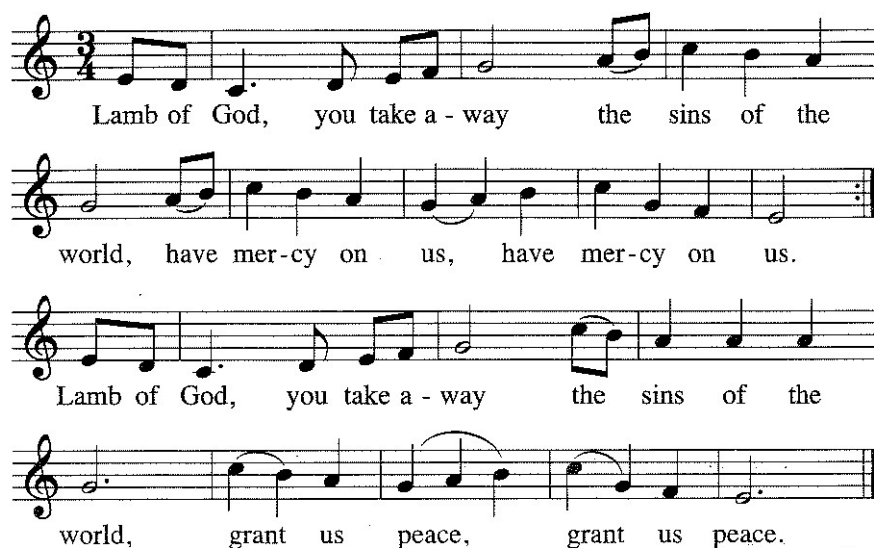
Distribution of Holy Communion

Holy Communion is offered continuously at the Lord's table and at the high altar. Please follow the ushers' prompts, walking forward to the desired communion station and returning via the side aisles. On the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, distribution is by wafers and small cups, and on the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of the month distribution is by intinction. Gluten free wafers and grape juice are always available. Communion kits are no longer available.

Communion Music

“Lamb of God” from *Christmas Carol Mass*

Traditional English Carol



“In the Bleak Midwinter”

Tune by Gustav Holst

Setting for cello and organ by David M. Cherwien

“Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning”

African American Spiritual

*Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, for this work's almost done. Children, don't grow weary;
for this work's almost done. Darker midnight lies before us, for this work's almost done.
Lo, the morning soon is breaking, for this work's almost done. Children, don't grow weary,
for this work's almost done.*

“Sleepers Awake, a Voice Is Calling” BWV 645

Johann Sebastian Bach

Please stand as able.

Post-Communion Blessing

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

Amen.

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray. Generous God, we thank you for this 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.

SENDING

Sending 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.

Recessional Hymn

“Savior of the Nations, Come” ELW 263

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

1. Savior of the nations, come; virgin’s son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav’n and earth: God has chosen such a birth.
2. Not by human flesh and blood, but the mystic Breath of God,
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of woman, blossom fresh.
3. Wondrous birth—oh, wondrous child—from his throne, a virgin mild!
Very God, and Mary’s son, eager now his race to run!
4. From God’s heart the Savior speeds, back to God his pathway leads;
out to vanquish death’s command, back to reign at God’s right hand.
5. Now your manger, shining bright, hallows night with newborn light,
night cannot this light subdue; let our faith shine ever new.
6. Praise we sing to Christ the Lord, virgin’s son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-398; Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. Hymnal version © 2006 Augsburg Fortress; Music: J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbuchlein*, 1524

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.
Thanks be to God.

Please be seated.

Postlude

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

Setting for organ by Paul O. Manz

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Worship Leaders: Pastor Timothy McKenzie; prayer assistant: Lisa Barnette; crucifer/ acolyte: Needed; lector: Meg Fielding; live streaming camera: Ron Wenzel; soundboard: Neil Dixon; ushers: Doug Milheim, Marc & Susan Ginns, Eddie Goodall, Sean Fielding; greeters: Joanne Marz, Tom & Kay Sehorn; communion assistants: Lisa Barnette, Rebecca Huang, Charles Lakeman, Gretchen Payne, A.J. Pridgen; communion helper: Karen Covington; tabulators :Charles Lakeman, Dawn Schwartz; musicians: St. Mark’s Choir; John Brumbaugh, cellist; Nick Matherly, Nick Hanewinckel, cantors; Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

Next Sunday Leaders: prayer assistant: Michael Thompson; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: TBD; live streaming camera: Joe Barrett; soundboard: Alan Harms; ushers: Team B; greeters: Gretchen Dodge, Ted Seman, David Thomason; communion assistants: Cliff Edahl, John Simon, Christ Stevenson, Nick Wartner, Betsy Wenzel; communion helper: Catherine Metze; tabulators :Kevin Feezor, Susan Lakeman

✠ ✠ ✠

From the pastor -

"Watch, Prepare, Rejoice, and Blessing" are this year's themes during Advent. In week 1 Jesus exhorts us to be on guard, to "watch" as we anticipate standing before the Son of Man, and in week 2, Isaiah writes, "Prepare the way of the Lord." In week 3, Paul writes in Philippians, "Rejoice in the Lord always," and in week 4, Elizabeth says to Mary, "Blessed are you among women." Like Mary, we are called blessed when we watch, prepare, and rejoice in the advent of Christ in our lives. We are people living in constant expectation of Jesus' advent each day and in his final coming with the saints to usher in a new heaven and a new earth. Amid the busyness of this time of the year, may you also watch, prepare, and rejoice. In doing so, you will find yourself blessed again by the fulfillment of his life-giving promises.

In the peace and light of Christ,
Pastor Tim McKenzie
pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Coming Up at St. Mark's

Worship and Congregational Life

Advent begins today! Please be sure to pick up your "Advent Bag" after worship with a new Fortress Press Advent Devotional booklet. Make Advent a time of spiritual renewal deepening the meaning of this season.

Looking forward into Advent

12/1 Advent 1: Advent Bags and Devotional Booklet

12/4, 11, & 18: Advent Midweek Prayer 7 pm

12/6 UNCC University Chorale: Handel's Messiah 7 pm

12/8 Advent 2: Service of Lessons and Carols at 10:30 am

12/13 Carolina Pro Musica: A Baroque Christmas 7:30 pm

12/15 Advent 3: Service of Holy Communion 8:30 am and 10:30 am

12/22 Advent 4: Service of Holy Communion 8:30 am and 10:30 am

12/22 Queen City Ringers Concert 5 pm

During Advent, prepare your heart with prayer and song!

Poinsettias and Wreaths The cost will be the same as last year at \$12 per plant for honorium/memorial. In addition, someone may sponsor a door wreath with an honorium/memorial as well. The deadline for the Christmas Eve bulletin is Tuesday, 12/19. Order forms are in the Gathering Place.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH will be presented by the UNC Charlotte Orchestra and University Chorale, Friday, December 6th 7:00 pm in our sanctuary. Sixty singers and forty-five instrumentalists from the music department at UNC Charlotte will present twenty-six selections from this monumental choral masterpiece. Our Director of Music Les Ackerman will serve as organist. Tickets are \$10, but St. Mark's members will be admitted free of charge.

LESSONS AND CAROLS FOR ADVENT A service of readings and carols for the season of Advent will be presented on the Second Sunday of Advent, December 8th during our 10:30 am worship. St. Mark's Choir, organists Bibba Whitener and Les Ackerman, as well as trumpeter Gabriel Slesinger, will present anthems, hymns and carols, and instrumental selections for the season of Advent.



Aid for Hurricane Helene Victims Thank you to all for your donations. If you would like to help, please see the NC Synod's website.

Thinking of joining St. Mark's? Please see Pastor Tim to set up a time to talk. All people are welcome at St. Mark's!

The Christian Education Hour is at 9:30 am on Sundays. You are invited to join the Faith Forum for lively discussion on the book of Acts. The class meets in the Large Conference room. New members are always welcome.

Online worship is streamed live every Sunday at 10:30 am on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/SaintMarksLutheran/>).

St. Mark's email list If you are not receiving emails from St. Mark's, we may not have your correct email address. Please contact the church to let us know. We send at least 2 emails every week.

Family Ministry

Nursery: A fun-filled nursery, staffed by volunteers, is located downstairs. An usher is available to show you the way. Our safety protocols offer peace of mind so you can worship without worry.

Confirmation Class meets every Sunday at 9:30.

Stewardship

Please prayerfully consider your 2025 pledge to Christ's mission at St. Mark's. Your pledge is important to St. Mark's mission and may also be offered at any time. Brochures are available in the Gathering Place. Thank you for your faithful gifts to St. Mark's ministries. An online pledge option is also available from our website, or you may use the QR code.

You may use the QR code at left (hover your phone camera to connect) for immediate access to St. Mark's website donation page. Pledges and donations for Altar Flowers may also be made using this code.

2024 Altar Flower Sponsorship If you would like to sponsor live flowers for our Sunday worship service, please sign up on the calendar by the mailbox room or contact the church office.

Social Ministry

ROOM IN THE INN-WE NEED YOUR HELP! We offer our Room in the Inn guests toiletry bags with items they may need. We have enough to fill 35 bags -- but we **need 80 bags!** NEEDED --

Men's travel size deodorant -- 45

Body lotion (no fragrance) -- 34

Toothpaste -- 26

Toothbrushes -- 5

Donation basket is on the table in the hall across from the restrooms. THANKS!

NOURISH UP (Loaves & Fishes) The need for assistance in many families goes on. ALL foods are welcome but some items you may not have thought of but are certainly needed and appreciated: ketchup, mustard, mayo, salt, pepper, sugar, flour, tea bags, instant coffee, pancake mix "complete", syrup and cornbread mix. Please make sure all donations are NON-PERISHABLE and NON-BREAKABLE. The gathering place baker's rack is always waiting for your donations to those in our community in need. *"When I was hungry you gave me food"*

Soup Kitchen St. Mark's Soup Kitchen is serving lunch in the Fellowship Hall every Thursday for our neighbors. If you would like to serve, please contact us. You may also support the Soup Kitchen through financial donations sent to the church, or through St. Mark's online giving portal. Help us share God's love!

Announcements

AA meets in the Fellowship Hall: Monday nights "Third Tradition", 7 p.m.; Wednesday nights "Just the Basics", 7:30 p.m.; and Thursday nights "Not a Glum Lot", 6:30 p.m.; in Room 210: Thursday nights at 6:30 p.m. & Saturday morning 10:30 a.m. "SLAA".



Advent
Midweek Prayer -
Prepare the way of the Lord!

December 4, 11, and 18
7 pm at St. Mark's
(and live on Facebook)

All are welcome -
Together we are the
body of Christ!

Music Notes

"Savior of the Nations, Come" ELW 263, comes to us from Ambrose of Milan (340-397 A.D.), who is often referred to as the father of Latin hymnody or church song. Paul Westermeyer writes: "Ambrose was not the first to write hymns, but his hymns were the first ones the church found worth keeping." This hymn rings the keynote for Advent, with six stanzas providing opportunity to proclaim God's purpose in sending the Messiah and our response to this Good News. The hymn was translated into German by Martin Luther in 1523 and the translation begins, **NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND** (the tune name). Martin Luther is certainly revered for his reforming activities, writing, teaching and work as a pastor, but he also wrote and adapted many hymn tunes to accommodate his hymn texts, this hymn being a probable collaboration with publisher and colleague Johann Walter (1496-1560).

This Week: From the Lutheran Church Calendar

December 3, Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, (1506-1552)

A native of the Basque region of Spain, Francis Xavier was one of the initial seven, and a co-founder of the Jesuits, that formed around Ignatius de Loyola in 1534. Ordained a priest in 1537, Xavier was a missionary to Goa, India, Southeast Asia, and Japan. He was appointed Apostolic nuncio to the East. Xavier is remembered for his evangelistic work among indigenous peoples and children. He set the course for mission in Asia and Japan, which was radical at the time, emphasizing learning local languages for preaching and catechetical work.

December 4, John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter (c.675/676-749)

Born to a wealthy family in Damascus and well educated in Greek and Arabic, John followed his grandfather and father into a career in finance and government, later leaving this to become a monk in an abbey near Jerusalem. John wrote many hymns as well as theological works. Foremost among the latter is a work called "The Fount of Wisdom," which touches on philosophy, heresy, and the orthodox faith. Drawing upon the teachings of Nicene and post-Nicene theology, it is a summary of the Christian faith that remained influential for centuries.

December 6, Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, (270-342)

Though Nicholas is one of the church's most beloved saints, little is known about his life. He was a bishop in what is now Turkey, and is reported to have been at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Stories that surround Nicholas tell of his love for God and neighbor, especially the poor. Nicholas' legendary habit of secret gift-giving became the model for Sinterklaas, or Santa Claus.

December 7, Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, (c.340-397)

Born into a Christian family, Ambrose had not yet been baptized while serving as Roman governor in northern Italy. As governor, he traveled to Milan to quell conflict in the church, and was seen as a moderating force, to such a degree that both sides called for him to become the next bishop of Milan. Thinking himself unworthy, Ambrose fled and hid, but after encouragement by Emperor Gratian, he was baptized and then consecrated bishop of Milan. Ambrose became a champion of Nicene trinitarian theology, and an opponent of Arianism. Ambrose was bishop when another young seeker, named Augustine, arrived in Milan. Ambrose's preaching is credited with leading Augustine to the Christian faith. Ambrose is credited with authorship of three ELW hymns, including the Advent hymn, *Veni redemptor gentium* ("Savior of the Nations, Come" ELW 263).

Adapted from Sundays and Seasons

St. Mark's Prayer List

Ross Boheler, Betty Denison, Charlene Oppermann, Susan G., Ron and Nancy Stepp, Elaine Ketner Sherman, Patty Allen, Jarrod Braunschweiger, Julie Dornberger, Grey Hamilton, Jettie Leslie, Angie Blackwelder Malone, Norma Alexander, Laura Elliott, Gene Ellington, Ken Foust, Tanner Grant, Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Danyne Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa Coburn, Ingrid Keiris, Shirley Larson, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Bill Schwartz, Sergei Kobiakov, Arlene Fielding, Oakley Coburn, David Kutscher, Danielle Clausen, Rachel Fulp, Joseph Tolbert, and Jay Harbinson.

Please email Pastor McKenzie with Prayer List and other prayer requests

(pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Readings for 12/8/2024 Second Sunday of Advent (10:30 Lessons & Carols)

Isaiah 40:1-8
Jeremiah 23:5-6
Zechariah 9:9-10
Haggai 2:6-9
Isaiah 35:1-6
Luke 1:26-35, 38
Mark 1: 1-15

Birthdays

12/1 Tom Tolbert
12/5 Judy Cox
12/5 Ann Danello
12/7 Marty Schwartz
12/7 Grey Hamilton



Do you feel like you are in crisis? In Isaiah it is written, "Fear not, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God." Stephen ministers are here to show the Lord's love and comfort for you in times of trial. If you would like to confidentially speak to a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Tim (pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)



Our Ministers

All the people of God at St. Mark's

Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor

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Lester Ackerman,

Director of Music Ministry, Organist

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Sue Wadgymer, Parish Administrator

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Elaine Johnson, Interim

Financial Administrator

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St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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