## Fourth Sunday of Advent

## ~ December 18, 2022 ~ Faith & First

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Confession and Forgiveness** LBW pg. 56 ELW pg. 94

P: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

***C: Amen.***

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

***C: Amen.***

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

P: Most merciful God,

***C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen.***

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

***C: Amen.***

**Peace**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

***C: And also with you.***

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath “*Waiting, Preparation, Joy, Light*”**

At last! The fourth Sunday in Advent! The first candle gave us light to

wait, and it was a long wait. **The first candle is lit.**

The second candle gave us light to prepare, and we are almost ready. **The second candle is lit.**

The third candle helped us to celebrate God’s promise to come. **The third candle is lit.**

Now we light the fourth candle to remind us that Jesus, the light of the

world, is coming to us. **The fourth candle is lit.**

From Isaiah 9: “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great

light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined.”

Let us pray: God of love, you have sent your Son as the light of the world. Even now that light is breaking in upon us. May we reflect the light of your love, even as we wait for you to come again. Amen.

**Gathering Hymn *“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”*** vs. 1, 2, 3 & 4

WOV #630 ELW #240

Vs. 1 Light one candle to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
 He shall bring salvation to Israel, God fulfills the promise.

Vs. 2 Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
 He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.

Vs. 3 Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
 Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.

Vs. 4 Light four candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
 He is coming, tell the glad tidings. Let your light be shining.

**Greeting** LBW pg. 57 ELW pg. 138

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

***C: And also with you.***

**Kyrie** LBW pg. 58 ELW pg. 138

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

P: 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.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Amen.***

**Hymn of Praise** LBW pg. 58ELWPg 138

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God’s people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,

We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,

You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us;

You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,

You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

In the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**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**

*An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz, that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety; Immanuel, God is with us!*

10Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, 11Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. 12But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. 13Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? 14Therefore 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. 15He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16For 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.

**Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19**

1Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

**2In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.**

3Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**4O Lord God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray? Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

5You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**6You have mad us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

7Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**17Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

18And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

**19Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

**Second Lesson: Romans 1:1-7**

*Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter’s opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God’s gospel. The gospel’s obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.*

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

**Gospel:** **Matthew 1:18-25**

*Matthew’s story of Jesus’ birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means “God saves.”*

18Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 20But 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. 21She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” 22All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” 24When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, 25but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

**Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day *“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”***  LBW #29 ELW #256

Vs. 1 "Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow’s load.  
 To God's people now proclaim that God's pardon waits for them!  
 Tell them that their war is over; God will reign in peace forever.

Vs. 2 For the herald’s voice is crying in the desert far and near,  
 calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way.  
 Valleys, rise to greet the Savior; hills, bow down in humble favor.

Vs. 3 Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain.  
 Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God's holy reign.  
 For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,  
 and all flesh shall see the token that God’s word is never broken.

**Apostles’ Creed** LBW pg. 65ELW pg. 105

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 the People**

**“*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying***” WOV #775 ELW #752

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ’s presence, let us pray for a world the yearns for new hope.

God our shepherd, let your Spirit move with power throughout the church. Give discernment and wisdom to our bishops, pastors, deacons, SAMs and lay leaders. Take away our fear, so that we serve and love, confident that you are guiding us. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our source, awaken us to the beauty of the earth and the marvelous variety of life. Unite humankind in repairing and caring for your creation. Protect creatures and habitats in peril due to rising seas and warming temperatures. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our vision, raise up leaders in every nation who dream of freedom and justice for all people. We pray for the work of international organizations that promote peace and human rights, especially Amnesty International. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our helper, come to the aid of all who cry out to you. Shelter migrants, refugees, and those fleeing war and famine. Bring relief to individuals and families experiencing hunger, homelessness, or impoverishment. Comfort any who are isolated or lonely.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our Emmanuel, you are with us in our live together. We give you thanks for gathering us in worship and fellowship, and we remember those who cannot be present. Watch over those who travel. Heal the sick and speed their recovery especially

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our hope, you bring life out of death, and you promise to be our God forever. Shine upon the faithful who now rest in the fulfillment of your promise and bring us also into your blessed reign of peace. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus’ name we pray. **Amen.**

**“*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying***” WOV #775 ELW #752

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

**Offering**

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray, God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus, Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Great Thanksgiving** LBW pg. 68ELW pg. 145

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.***

**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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

***C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.***

**Lord’s Prayer** LBW pg. 71ELW pg. 145

P: Let us pray as Jesus has taught us.

***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.***

**Communion**

**Post Communion Blessing**

**Prayer after Communion**

P: God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. ***Amen.***

**Blessing**

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord’s face shine on us with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon us with favor and + give you peace.

**Sending Hymn *“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”*** LBW #221 ELW #547

Vs. 1 Sent forth by God’s blessing, our true faith confessing,  
 the people of God from this dwelling take leave.  
 The supper is ended. Oh, now be extended  
 the fruits of this service in all who believe.  
 The seed of Christ’s teaching, receptive souls

reaching, shall blossom in action for God and for all.  
 Your grace shall incite us, your love shall unite us  
 to work for your kingdom and answer your call.

Vs. 2 With praise and thanksgiving to God ever-living,  
 the tasks of our ev’ryday life we will face—  
 our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,  
 embracing God’s children, the whole human race.  
 With your feast you feed us, with your light now lead us;  
 unite us as one in this life that we share.  
 Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving  
 give honor to Christ and his name that we bear.

**Dismissal**

L: Go in peace. Christ is coming soon!

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

***TURN YOUR MIC OFF!!***

**Postlude**