



**WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

**December 6, 2020**

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones    Lay Ministry Administrator: Jenny Hoffman**

**Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz    Soloist: Kyla Betts    Viola: Tracy Becker**

**Lector: Michael Warwick (8:00 a.m.)    Moses Harris (9:15 a.m.)**

**Ushers: Todd Skavlen, Mark Wilberg (8:00 a.m.)    Mike, Siri & Soren Vienneau**

**Tune your radio to FM 87.9    Technical Support: Thomas Lehr**

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

**CALL TO WORSHIP: "Advent Air" Teschner/Petker**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

**P:** We praise you O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ's Advent.

**C:** As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness.

**P:** Enlighten us with your grace, that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us.

**C:** **Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

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

**C: Amen.**

**P:** Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

**C: Amen**

**P:** Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P:** Loving and forgiving God,

**C: We confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

**P:** People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, + comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**HYMN: "On Jordan's Banks" #249 vss. 1,2 & 5**

**Vs. 1: On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**Vs. 2: Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; make straight the way for God within, and let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.**

**Vs. 5: All praise to you, eternal Son, whose advent has our freedom won, whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Spirit, evermore.**

### **GREETING**

**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.**

*Honk your horns to greet one another.*

### **LITANY**

**P:** In the beginning was the Word,

**C: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**P:** In the Word was life,

**C: and the life was the light of all people.**

**P:** The Word became flesh and lived among us,

**C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

### **HYMN OF PRAISE: "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" #257 ELW vss. 3 & 4**

**Vs. 3: O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain**

#### *Refrain*

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

**Vs.4: O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny; from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain**

### **SALUTATION**

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

*Honk your horns to greet one another.*

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**ANTHEM: “All Earth Is Hopeful” Taule/Cherwien**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11**

<sup>1-2</sup> “Comfort, oh comfort my people,” says your God. “Speak softly and tenderly to Jerusalem, but also make it very clear that she has served her sentence, that her sin is taken care of—forgiven! She’s been punished enough and more than enough, and now it’s over and done with.” <sup>3-5</sup> Thunder in the desert! “Prepare for GOD’s arrival! Make the road straight and smooth, a highway fit for our God. Fill in the valleys, level off the hills, Smooth out the ruts, clear out the rocks. Then GOD’s bright glory will shine and everyone will see it. Yes. Just as GOD has said.” <sup>6-8</sup> A voice says, “Shout!” I said, “What shall I shout?” “These people are nothing but grass, their love fragile as wildflowers. The grass withers, the wildflowers fade, if GOD so much as puffs on them. Aren’t these people just so much grass? True, the grass withers and the wildflowers fade, but our God’s Word stands firm and forever.” <sup>9-11</sup> Climb a high mountain, Zion. You’re the preacher of good news. Raise your voice. Make it good and loud, Jerusalem. You’re the preacher of good news. Speak loud and clear. Don’t be timid! Tell the cities of Judah, “Look! Your God!” Look at him! God, the Master, comes in power, ready to go into action. He is going to pay back his enemies and reward those who have loved him. Like a shepherd, he will care for his flock, gathering the lambs in his arms, Hugging them as he carries them, leading the nursing ewes to good pasture.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL CANTICLE: “Emmanuel”**

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.  
God with us, revealed in us; his name is called Emmanuel.**

*The Gospel is announced...*

**P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter.**

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

## **GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8**

<sup>1-3</sup>The good news of Jesus Christ—the Message!—begins here, following to the letter the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Watch closely: I’m sending my preacher ahead of you; He’ll make the road smooth for you. Thunder in the desert! Prepare for God’s arrival! Make the road smooth and straight! <sup>4-6</sup>John the Baptizer appeared in the wild, preaching a baptism of life-change that leads to forgiveness of sins. People thronged to him from Judea and Jerusalem and, as they confessed their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River into a changed life. John wore a camel-hair habit, tied at the waist with a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild field honey. <sup>7-8</sup>As he preached he said, “The real action comes next: The star in this drama, to whom I’m a mere stagehand, will change your life. I’m baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. His baptism—a holy baptism by the Holy Spirit—will change you from the inside out.”

**P:** The gospel of the Lord.

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

## **SERMON**

### **HYMN: “There’s a Voice in the Wilderness” #255 ELW**

**Vs. 1: There's a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:  
Prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places where God, our God, may go!**

**Vs. 2: O Jerusalem, herald good tidings, ascend to the heights and sing!  
Proclaim to a desolate people the coming of their king.  
Like flow'rs of the field we perish, like grass our works decay;  
the pow'r and the pomp of nations shall pass like a dream away.**

**Vs. 3: But the word of our Savior is faithful, the arm of our God is strong,  
who stands in the midst of the nations and soon will right the wrong.  
Lord, feed your flock like a shepherd, the lambs so gently hold;  
in pastures of peace now lead them, and bring them to your fold.**

## **APOSTLE’S 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 INTERCESION**

**P:** God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*Honk your horns three times after each petition.*

**P:** Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear

us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work. Make their generous lives an example for all. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

#### **THE SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*Honk your horns to greet one another.*

#### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

#### **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.**

#### **COMMUNION**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**P:** Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here. Come, eat and drink.

#### **COMMUNION BLESSING**

**P:** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace until life everlasting.

**C: Amen**

**COMMUNION HYMN: “Lost in the Night” set by Floeter**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C:** Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world’s needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**ANOUNCEMENTS**

**BENEDICTION**

**P:** The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long expected Savior to fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit to guide your journey, + now and forever.

**C:** Amen.

**P:** Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord!

**C:** Thanks be to God!

*Honk your horns!*

**SENDING HYMN: “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” #254 ELW**

**Vs. 1:** Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,  
dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.

**Vs. 2:** Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king;  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

**POSTLUDE: “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” Walker/Beckstrand**