

## **Mount Calvary Lutheran Church**

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The Rev. James N. West, Interim Pastor

*December 7 & 8, 2024 Advent 2*

## Preparing to Hear Today's Readings

Luke sets the preaching of John the Baptist clearly in the midst of the political and religious environment of his day. We are told the names of the emperor, governor, and other political rulers of the day. They are the ones who are supposed to care for the welfare of the citizens of their territories. Although John gave his message while he was in the wilderness, it was intended to have its impact in the farms, villages, and cities where the ordinary and the powerful live out their daily lives.

John is not satisfied with the way things are, and his words help prepare us for the coming of one who will turn the world upside down. John's words tell us to examine our own lives and the world around us. We should not be complacent in the face of injustice, but instead seek forgiveness and strive for lives that bear fruit according to God's vision for the world.

## Gathering

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### Preservice Music

### Welcome

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,  
the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free,  
the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy,  
the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace.

**Amen.**

Let us come before God in confession.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

To you, O God, we lift up our souls.

**You know us through and through;  
we confess our sins to you.**

**Remember not our sins;  
remember us with your steadfast love.**

**Show us your ways; teach us your paths;  
and lead us in justice and truth,  
for the sake of your goodness  
in Jesus Christ our Savior.**

**Amen.**

Children of God, come with joy  
 and draw water from the well of salvation.  
 Remember the gift of baptism:  
 your sin is washed away in the name of † Jesus;  
 you belong to Christ.  
 Stand up and raise your heads!  
 The reign of God is near.  
**Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn** “Hark the Glad Sound”

**No. 239**

**Advent Greeting**

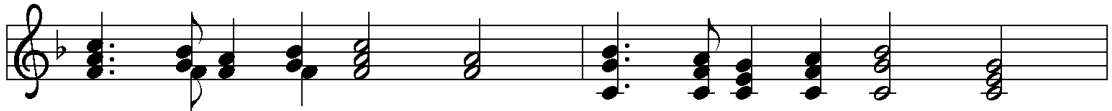
In the days to come,  
 the holy mountain of the Lord’s house  
 shall be raised above the hills;  
 and all nations shall stream to it.

**Come, let us go up to the house of our God.**

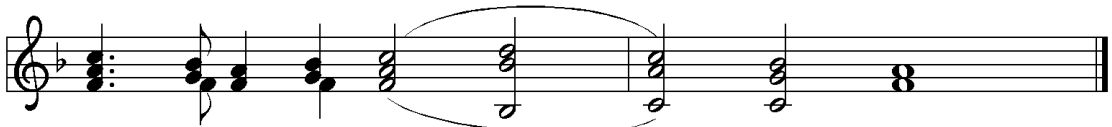
From the One who is and who was  
 and who is to come, the Almighty:  
 grace, light, and peace be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**Kyrie**



1, 3	Ky - ri - e	e - lei - son.	Ky - ri - e	e - lei - son.
2	Chris - te	e - lei - son.	Chris - te	e - lei - son.
1, 3	Lord, . . .	have mer - cy.	Lord, . . . .	have mer - cy.
2	Christ, . . .	have mer - cy.	Christ, . . . .	have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e	e - le	-	i - son.
Chris - te	e - le	-	i - son.
Lord, . . .	have mer	-	cy.
Christ, . . .	have mer	-	cy.

## Prayer of the Day

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.**

## Word

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

### First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4

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

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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; <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm: Luke 1:68-79 (Zechariah’s Song)

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

<sup>69</sup>**You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,  
born of the house of your servant David.**

<sup>70</sup>Through your holy prophets,  
you promised of old to save us from our enemies,

<sup>71</sup>from the hands of all who hate us,

<sup>72</sup>**to show mercy to our forebears,  
and to remember your holy covenant.**

<sup>73</sup>This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:

<sup>74</sup>to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

**free to worship you without fear,**

<sup>75</sup>**holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.**

<sup>76</sup>And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

<sup>77</sup>**to give God's people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

<sup>78</sup>In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

<sup>79</sup>**to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

## **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.*

<sup>3</sup>I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup>constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup>because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.

<sup>9</sup>And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup>to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup>having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **The Candles of Advent and Christmas** *A Children's Presentation*

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.**

## **Blessing of the Advent Wreath** (*We stand*)

Loving God, during this Advent season,  
we open all the dark places in our lives  
to the healing light of Christ.

**Show us the creative power of peace.**

**Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
that we may walk in the light of Christ.**

*As the peace candle is lit, we sing*

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

## **Gospel: Luke 3:1-6**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>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, <sup>2</sup>during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

<sup>3</sup>He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>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;

<sup>6</sup>and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon:** “A Holy Housekeeping”

**Hymn of the Day** “Prepare the Royal Highway”

**No. 264**

## **Nicene Creed**

We confess with one another and to our God, those things we know to be eternally true.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,  
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. 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, 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 not-for-profit organizations and governments that broker peace and care for refugees, immigrants, and all caught in the center of conflict. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Rescuing God, restore your people who are in any need. Heal all who are suffering especially those we name in our hearts or aloud. 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.**

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**

## **Children's Message (Sunday)**

### **Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

### **Meal**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ*

**Offering Song for Advent**      "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

**No. 490**

### **Offering Prayer**

God our provider, by your merciful hand  
abundance springs up from the earth.

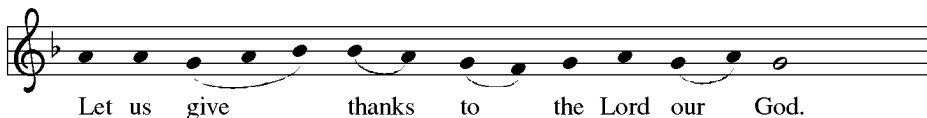
Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.



Let them be a sign of your steadfast love  
and faithfulness for all people,  
through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## The Great Thanksgiving



It is indeed right and salutary  
that we should at all times and in all places  
offer thanks and praise to you,  
O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God.  
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 again  
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'r and might,  
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
 san-na. 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.

## Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy Father,  
 You are the beginning and the end,  
 the giver of all life:  
 It is You who gave birth to creation,  
 You, from whom all light has shined,  
 You, who is faithful to your promises,  
 You, who opened Mary to your will.  
 You, from who your Son proceeds,  
 your Word made flesh.

### *Our Lord's Words of Institution*

With this bread and cup  
 we remember your Word made flesh,  
 dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.  
 May your Word now take flesh in us,  
 filling us with your light  
 and bringing to us the gift of peace.  
 To you O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
 be all honor and glory i  
 n your holy church, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## 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.**

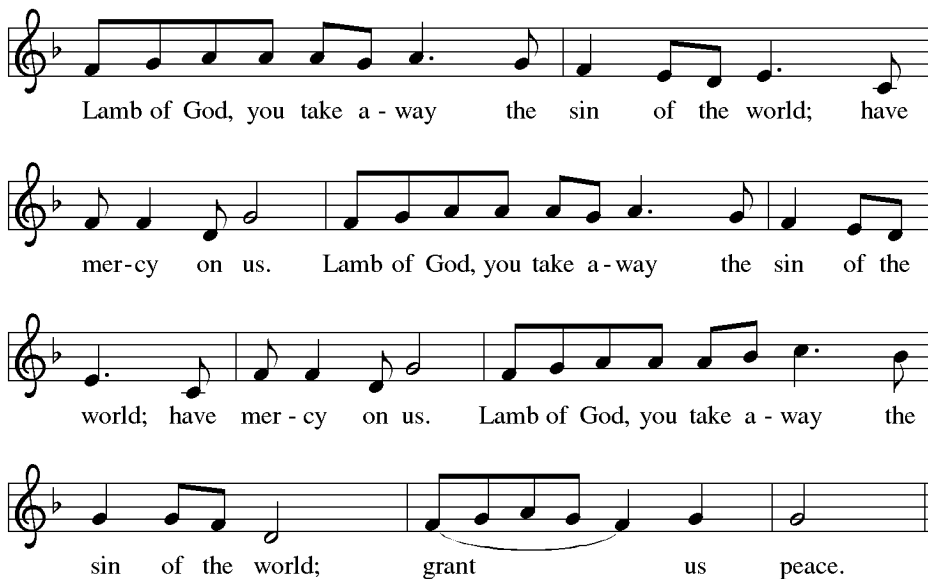
**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## Invitation to Communion

The food of God for the people of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

**Special Music** “Manger Throne” Performed by Phil Wickman

### **Prayer after Communion**

Most loving God,  
In this meal you have given us a foretaste  
of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things.  
Bless these gifts to your purpose  
and teach us patience and hope  
as we care for those in need  
until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Sending**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### **Blessing**

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

**Sending Hymn** “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

**No. 249**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. The reign of God is near.  
**Thanks be to God.**

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### Readers/Communion Assistants

Dec 7 Corlee Louder  
Dec 8 Jamie McMullen

Dec 14\*\*HELP WANTED\*\*  
Dec 15 Shannon Reed

Dec 21\*\*HELP WANTED\*\*  
Dec 22 Jamie McMullen

### Ushers

Dec 7 The Rychak's  
Dec 8\*\*HELP WANTED\*\*

Dec 14 Pat Bittner & Linda Barnhart  
Dec 15\*\*HELP WANTED\*\*

Dec 21 Tim & Kerri Moyer  
Dec 22 Mayket Family