



Blessed are you  
among women

LUKE 1:42

## **Mount Calvary Lutheran Church**

1000 Scalp Avenue

Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15904

814-266-4859

[www.mt-calvarylutheran.org](http://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org)

The Rev. James N. West, Interim Pastor

*December 21 & 22, 2024 Advent 4*

## Preparing to Hear Today's Readings

The cradle and the cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

### Gathering

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

### Preservice Music

#### Welcome

#### Confession and Forgiveness (We stand)

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.**

**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.**

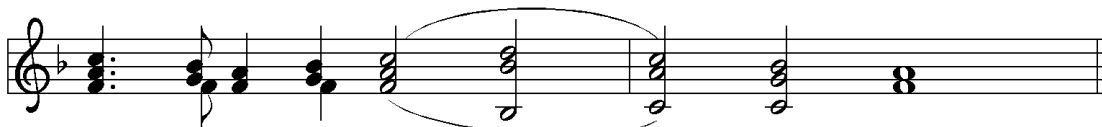
From the One who is and who was  
 and who is to come, the Almighty:  
 grace, light, and peace be with you all.

**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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Word

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

### First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

*The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This “one who is to rule” will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be fulfilled in the coming of Jesus.*

<sup>2</sup>But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth; <sup>5a</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm 80:1-7

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

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

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

<sup>4</sup>**O LORD God of hosts,  
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

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

<sup>6</sup>**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

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

## **Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10**

*Hebrew's author uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ's coming. Accepting God's will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.*

<sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,  
but a body you have prepared for me;

<sup>6</sup>in burnt offerings and sin offerings  
you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup>Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’  
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”

<sup>8</sup>When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup>then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup>And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

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

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

Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent.

Our preparations are almost complete for Christmas Eve –  
for the coming of Jesus.

**We have lit a candle each week to remind us that  
Jesus brings light into the dark places of the world.**

Today we are reminded that God so loved the world that a Child was given.  
God's love was given flesh and bone.

**O God of love, we eagerly await the birth of Jesus,  
The Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, God-with-us.**

*As the fourth candle is lit, we sing (tune #240)*

**Light four candles to watch for Messiah:**

**let the light banish darkness.**

**He is coming, tell the glad tidings.**

**Let your lights be shining!**

## **Gospel: Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

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

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup> His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

The gospel of the Lord.

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

**Sermon:** "Pregnant Prophets"

*We stand*

**Hymn of the Day** "The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came"

**No. 265**

## **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.*

Faithful Lord, you keep your promises. Move your church to sing like Mary and rejoice like Elizabeth. Teach us to sing of your faithfulness all our days. Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

Ancient of Days, with joy you danced over the waters and birthed creation. Give us joy in caring for the soil beneath us, the water around us, and the sky above us. Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer**

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. We pray especially for the Syrian people as they embark on building a new nation that is tolerant of the many faith traditions seeking peace in that place. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, you feed your flock. Fill the hungry with good things. Lift up the lowly. Accompany the refugee. Comfort the lonely. Heal the sick, especially those we name in our hearts either silently or aloud. Send us in haste to surround them with your love. Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer**

Love Incarnate, you are with us at the manger, on the cross, and on the resurrection road. Walk with all who live with depression, grief, or heartache in this season. Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer**

Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**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** “O Lord How Shall I Meet You” *verses 3 & 4* **No. 241**

**Love caused your incarnation;**

**love brought you down to me.**

**Your thirst for my salvation**

**procured my liberty.**

**Oh, love beyond all telling,**

**that led you to embrace**

**in love, all love excelling,**

**our lost and fallen race.**



**Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,  
who sit in deepest gloom,  
who mourn your joys departed  
and tremble at your doom.  
All hail the Lord's appearing!  
O glorious Sun, now come,  
send forth your beams so cheering  
and guide us safely home.**

### **Offering Prayer** *We Stand*

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**

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notes are quarter notes, mostly moving in an ascending or descending stepwise pattern. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words hyphenated across bar lines. The first staff has two measures, the second and third have two measures each, and the fourth has one measure.

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  
in 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 away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, Grant us peace.**

**Special Music** “Breath Of Heaven(Mary’s Song)” performed by Amy Grant

**Prayer after Communion** *We Stand*

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** “Joy to the World”

**No. 267**

**Dismissal**

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

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Readers/Communion Assistants

Dec 21 Jan Layton  
Dec 22 Jamie McMullen  
  
Dec 24 4:00pm Carter & Laura Bower  
Dec 24 7:00pm Corlee Louder & Jack  
Weisbrodt

Ushers

Dec 21 Tim & Kerri Moyer  
Dec 22 Mayket Family  
  
Dec 24 4:00pm The Rychak’s  
Dec 24 7:00pm Tim & Kerri Moyer