

# Worship in the Home

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

### December 20, 2020



*In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While we cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer.*

### Prelude

### Announcements

### Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. **Amen.**

### Opening Hymn

### *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

ELW # 272



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath  
2 I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in  
3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the  
4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our hu - man



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as  
mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it, the  
air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the  
woe; O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who



seers of old have sung, it came, a flow'r so bright, a -  
vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right, she  
dark-ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God, from  
dost our weak - ness know: bring us at length, we pray, to



mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.  
bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.  
sin and death he saves us and light - ens ev - 'ry load.  
the bright courts of heav - en and in - to end - less day.

## **Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray...Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **Lighting the Advent Candles**

Blessed are you, O God. In Jesus you came to live among us. Give us hearts ready to welcome you when you come to us in friends, neighbors, and strangers. **Amen.**

**First Reading:** 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

**Second Reading:** Romans 16:25-27

**Gospel:** Luke 1:26-38

The holy gospel according to Luke, the first chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin woman engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by the angel's words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his dominion there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Psalmody:** Luke 1:46b-55

<sup>46b</sup>My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

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

<sup>48</sup>for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed:

<sup>49</sup>**you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name.**

<sup>50</sup>You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup>**You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,**

<sup>52</sup>casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.

<sup>53</sup>**You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.**

<sup>54</sup>You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy,

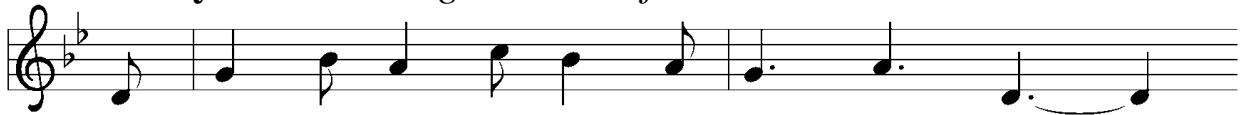
<sup>55</sup>**the promise made to our forbears, to Abraham and his children forever.**

**Homily**

**Hymn of the Day**

*The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

*ELW # 265*



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,  
2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,  
3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;  
4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born



with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:  
all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;  
"To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.  
in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,



"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,  
thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,  
"My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."  
and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:



most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."  
most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."      Glo - ri - a!  
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,  
"Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."

## Reflection

“The Lord is with you,” says Nathan to David. “The Lord is with you,” says the angel to Mary. When we hear these readings today they say to us, “The Lord is with you.” We have been and are afraid, especially now. Though we have heard promises about how kings and other rulers will do wonderful things, they have cruelly disappointed our hopes. “Do not be afraid,” these readings say to us. The house that God builds is neither a royal temple nor a dynasty of kings, for the true king is not a king at all, but a child born among the poor who grows to become a crucified man and lives as Christ arisen. In the power of the Spirit, he is present now, making any place where his word is heard to be the house of God. That secret is now disclosed. We usually come to the house God builds when we gather with the assembly to hear the word and to receive Christ in the holy communion. But even in these days, God’s word sounds in our homes and in our hearts. We become God’s house, empowered to share Christ with our world. “The Lord is with you.” Now. Listen to that word. With Mary, trust it. Say, “Let it be to me according to your word.”

## Prayers of Intercession

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, let us pray that God comes quickly to this weary world.

O God, Emmanuel, we pray: be with us. Bless our national church and our own congregation. Bless also our neighbors of other denominations and faiths, that strengthened by your presence we may support one another in love and together serve those in need. Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

O God, the Wisdom of the world, as tomorrow the earth’s north tilts back toward the sun, preserve vegetation and wild animals during winter. Form us into a people who honor your creation. Make of our decorated Christmas trees signs of our thankfulness for the earth. Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

O God, King of nations, bring peace and justice to the countries of the world. Lead the nations of the Middle East toward peace with one another and justice for the Palestinians. Guide our elected leaders toward honest and compassionate policies that serve all the people. Preserve our nation from discord and violence. Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

O God, Key of David, look with mercy on all who are locked into despair, who fear the darkness, who live brokenhearted. Open windows to those who are isolated. Abide with all who are incarcerated. Give shelter to the homeless and the refugees. Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

O God, Root of Jesse, nurture our community. Connect us with one another across all barriers, and bring an end to historic prejudices. Bless the work of food pantries and relief agencies, and inspire our holidays with your spirit of benevolence. Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

O God, Ruler of might, send your healing power to all in bodily need. Curb the coronavirus, and strengthen medical workers. For those with COVID-19 we pray: . . . Guide all world health organizations and governmental officials in the distribution of the vaccines, and calm the fears of those who are reluctant to receive the vaccine. Bring pregnant women to successful births. We pray especially for . . . . Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

O God, our Savior, dwell within us; make us your home, and receive the prayers of our hearts. Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

O God, Dayspring everlasting, we remember all who have died and now live in your light, especially Katharina von Bora Luther and those we name here before you: . . . Gather us to yourself, when we join with all the faithful of every time and land to sing Mary's hymn of praise. Hear our prayer, O God: **Come and save us soon.**

We cannot thank you enough, O Emmanuel, for your ongoing presence among us. Remain with us, and receive our prayers, for the sake of the Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who taught us to pray: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### **Benediction**

The Creator of the stars bless our Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill us with love, the unexpected Spirit guide our journey, + now and forever. **Amen.**



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the  
 2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .  
 3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a  
 4 Though the na - tions rage from . . age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the  
 work great . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the  
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your  
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . . from his throne.  
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my  
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to  
 The hun - gry poor shall . . weep no more, for the  
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my  
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the  
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry  
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?  
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



*Refrain*  
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

## **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Join us on Zoom for Fellowship: 596-621-1441 Passcode 8675309**

## **December's Special Envelope**

This month you will find an envelope marked "Christmas Offering". The designation for this offering is to help make up the deficit in the annual budget. If you are a monthly or quarterly contributor and would like to donate to this offering, please use a "PEW" envelope and mark "Christmas" along with your name or offering number.

## **Schedule**

### **Meetings**

TODAY, December 13: 10:30 AM Annual Congregational Meeting  
**via Zoom or PHONE**

### **Online Worship**

Sunday: Service of the Word Livestream 9:30 AM

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: Christmas Carols with Dr. Smith (recorded)

Tuesday: Morning & Evening Prayer 9 AM & 9 PM

Wednesday: Holden Evening Prayer 7 PM

Thursday: Morning Prayer 9 AM, Advent Devotions 7 PM (on Zoom)

### **Online Study**

Tuesday — Friday: Midday Kids' Devotions

## **Serving God and Us Today**

Our Pastor – Rev. Traci Marriott

Our Pianist – Dr. Adam Smith

Our Administrative Assistant – Lori Tremmel

Our Assistant Administrative Assistant – Laura Orczeck

Our Sexton – Bill Brown

Our Audio/Video Tech – Christopher Bush

Our Offering Counters – Jim Barley, Beth Garner

Third Quarter Ventures in Faith to "*United Lutheran Seminary*"

**Prayers are needed for our homebound:** Shirley Acker, Carl & Dawn Alexy, Verna Blough, Fred Brandenburg, Clyde Claycomb, Betty Helsel, Doris Henderson, Gene Henry, Jere Hess, Gerald Hoover, Janet Kreider, Ginny Sell, Dan Sinal, Don Smith, Nancy Uber, Joy Williams.

**Prayer Concerns:**, John Aljets, Amy & Family, Pastor Denise Arpino, Randy Barrett, Helena Bassler, Diane Cappel, Todd Chipperfield, Dwight Ciccotelli, Greg Comer, Greg Dick, Brian Fleck, Jim Freyer, Amy Haffling, Erika Hallam, Dan Hershberger, Audrey Hite, Jeff Hoenstine, Marilyn Horton, Amber Itle, Jenny, Darren Kreutzer, Kristen Malloy, Rick McIntyre, Ryder McDermitt, Betty McDowell, Nathan, Jim Negley, Aunt Mica, Deb Peters, Alana Rhodes, Paul Ruth, Barbara Smith, Drew Smith, Luther Steele, Michael Sutton, Joyce Taylor, Cindy Thomas, Carol Weyandt, Pete Williams, Lyndsay Yon, Jody Zelanko, and for our **Missionaries: Rev. Lesley Hand, On Eagle's Wings, Elizabeth Hendrickson.**

**Our college students:** Christopher Bush, Olivia Day, Jacob Orzeck.

**Specialist Training in the Army:** Nathan Smith

### **MITTEN COLLECTION "BOX"**

**Please drop off (in the mail slot by the Maple St. Entrance) school-age children's mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, earmuffs or socks to be placed in the Mitten Box TODAY, December 20<sup>th</sup>.** These will be distributed by the school nurse at the Spring Cove Elementary Schools for needy children. Donations of money can be given by mailing to St. Matthew Lutheran Church and in the memo line write "***Mitten BOX***", and the money will be used to purchase needed items. ***Let's help children have a warmer winter!***



## Monthly Schedule

### **December Worship Schedule**—All On Facebook

Sunday Worship Livestream 9:30AM

Monday & Friday Christmas Carols with Dr. Smith

Tuesday & Thursday Morning & Evening Prayer at 9AM & 9PM

Wednesday Holden Evening Prayer at 7PM

### **December Study Schedule**

Tuesday-Friday Kids' Devotions Midmorning on Facebook

Thursday Advent Devotional Series at 7PM ON ZOOM

### **Christmas Eve, First Sunday of Christmas**

Christmas Eve Pre-recorded Worship Available 7PM and after on Facebook

No Night Prayer

1st Sunday of Christmas - Service of Lessons & Carols 9:30AM on Facebook

\*\*\*No Midweek Services from December 28 through January 1\*\*\*

### **Dear members of the Allegheny Synod,**

I would like to invite the members of the Allegheny Synod to join my family and I in the singing of 'Silent Night' on Christmas Eve 2020. This year has cancelled many things that we usually are able to do together. So on this Christmas Eve let us join together in singing this old, familiar, and beloved carol.

I am inviting you to sing 'Silent Night' between 6pm and 9pm on Christmas Eve. In consultation with the Synod Council we decided to set a range of time so that it more easily can fit into your schedule. Perhaps you will sing this with your family or friends. In our home we are planning to light candles, and go on our front porch to sing for our community. My family will be singing at 6:30pm on Christmas Eve and we are planning to share this through Facebook live on the Allegheny Synod 8C Facebook page. You are welcome to join us and sing along.

I would also invite you. If you would like to post pictures or a video of you, your family, and friends singing Silent Night to social media, please include the hashtag #AlleghenyChristmas. We will look for your pictures and share them with the Synod.

The hope is that this can be away to do something together after we have been apart for so long.

*May God bless you,*

*Bishop Michael Rhyne*

Allegheny Synod, ELCA

## Greetings!

Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM) continues to plan for the future. To assist with our planning, we need to hear from our communities about human service challenges. We are particularly interested in feedback on ALSM at Home care services and affordable senior housing.

Please respond to our survey by December 31, 2020. Any questions, contact Patty Faith at 814.696.4556.

We wish you and your family a very blessed holiday season.

Survey link: <http://tiny.cc/ALSM>

**Andrea Schurr**

Director of Mission Advancement

Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries

998 Logan Blvd. | Altoona, PA 16602

814.696.4516 | Fax: 814.696.4561

## Readings for the Week:

**Monday** Luke 1:46b-55. **Tuesday** Hebrews 8:1-13. **Wednesday** 1 Samuel 2:1-10.

**Thursday** (Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve) Luke 2:1-15 [15-20]. **Friday**

(Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day) John 1:1-14. **Saturday** (Stephen, Deacon and Martyr) Acts 6:8 — 7:2a, 51-60. **First Sunday of Christmas** Isaiah 61:10 — 62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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