



"Faithfulness!"

Fourth Sunday in Advent

The Order of Worship

Pre-Service Music & Greeting

The Invocation

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

C: **And also with you.**

Prepare My Heart, Lord Jesus!”

Opening Hymn

“Arise, O Christian People”
Christian Worship 14 st. 1-3

Arise, O Christian people! Prepare yourselves today.
Prepare to greet the Savior, who takes your sins away.
To us, by grace alone the truth and light were given;
The promised Lord from heaven to all the world is shown.

Prepare the way before him; prepare for him the best.
Cast out what would offend him, this great, this heav’nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way; the lowly valley’s raising,
The heights of pride abasing, his path all even lay.

The Congregation will stand

The humble heart and lowly God raises up on high;
Beneath his feet in terror the haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right, that heeds God’s invitation
And makes true preparation — it is the Lord’s delight.

Prepare My Heart through Faithfulness

P: “Be faithful, even to the point of death.” This is the Lord’s will for our lives as his redeemed people. Sadly, we can never achieve the perfect faithfulness he desires. Our works never meet his expectations. Our ability to stand against temptation is never

sufficient. Our preparations to welcome him are met with daily distractions. Although we are unfaithful, God remains faithful. He keeps his promises, and in his faithfulness, he continues to show us undeserved love and patience. It is because of God's faithfulness that we can come before him and confess our sins of disobedience and rebellion.

C: Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a troubled and repentant sinner, confess that I have sinned against you in my thoughts, my words, and my actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I am distressed by the sins that trouble me and am deeply sorry for them.

Prepare My Heart through Your Faithfulness

P: God has heard and answered your plea for mercy, and has given his one and only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for your sins. Be assured nothing can separate you from the undeserved love of God. Be confident of God's powerful rescue in Christ Jesus. Be at peace because all your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: In his faithfulness God calls to us through his prophet:
"Prepare the way for the LORD. Look, God the LORD will come with strength, and his arm is ruling for him. Look, his reward is with him. The result of his work is in front of him. Like a shepherd he will care for his flock. With his arm he will gather the lambs. He will lift them up on his lap. (*Isaiah 40:3,10-11*)

P: As the fourth candle is lit, rejoice, because we have a faithful and loving God. Rejoice, because he has sent his Son just as he has promised. Rejoice, because through his gracious and almighty power, we can be faithful and ever prepared to meet our coming Savior.

Hymn verse

“Arise, O Christian People”
Christian Worship 14 st. 4

Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus; turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive you this blessed Adventide.
From stall and manger low come now to dwell within me;
I’ll sing your praises gladly and forth your glory show.

Prayer of the Day

P: O gracious and faithful God, we know you keep your word, especially your promise to send a Savior. In Jesus, we see the fulfillment of countless promises. In Jesus, we see your faithful compassion in rescuing us from sin and punishment. In Jesus, we have the encouragement and strength to be faithful in every situation. Keep us in your undeserved love. Strengthen us in every time of weakness and temptation. Fill us with your Holy Spirit to keep us faithful until we see our Savior and are welcomed into your heavenly kingdom. There we will praise you throughout endless ages as our true, faithful, and compassionate God—Father, Son, and Spirit.



C: A — — men!

The Lessons from God’s Word

“The Lord, our God is Faithful to His Promise!”

Old Testament

2 Samuel 7:8-16

⁸You are also to say the following to my servant David. This is what the LORD of Armies says. I took you from the pasture, from following sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel. ⁹I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make your reputation great, like that of the great ones on the earth. ¹⁰I will set up a place for my

people Israel, and I will plant them there. They will dwell there, and they will not be disturbed again. Violent men will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning ¹¹and ever since the day I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

The LORD also declares to you that the LORD himself will make a house for you. ¹²When your days are complete and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your seed, who will come from your own body. I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he sins, I will discipline him with a rod used by men and with blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵My faithful mercy will not depart from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed to make room for you. ¹⁶Your house will stand firm, and your kingdom will endure forever before you. Your throne will be established forever.

Psalm for the Day

Psalm 8

Refrain



I will praise your name for - ev - er, my King and my God.

Psalm tone



O LORD, our LORD, how majestic is your name in | all
the earth! *

You have set your glory above the | heavens.

When I consider your | heavens; *

The work of your | fingers,

What is man that you are mind- | ful of him, *

The Son of Man that you | care for him?

Refrain

You made him a little lower than the heavenly | beings, *
and crowned him with glory and | honor.

You made him ruler over the works | of your hands; *
you put everything un- | der his feet.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son, *
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning, *
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Refrain

Epistle

Romans 16:25-27

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you—
according to my gospel and the proclamation of
Jesus Christ,
according to the revelation of the mystery that was veiled
in silence for long ages past, ²⁶but now has been revealed
through the prophetic Scriptures and made known to all
the Gentiles, in keeping with the command of the eternal
God, resulting in the obedience of faith—
²⁷to God, who alone is wise, be glory forever through
Jesus Christ. Amen.

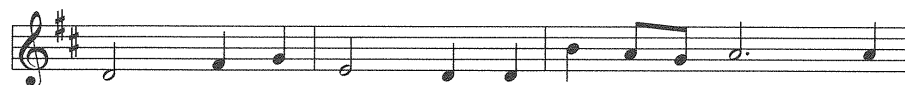
Verse of the Day

P: LORD, your mercy reaches to the heavens.
Your faithfulness to the skies.
Your righteousness is as high as the mountains of God.
Your justice is as deep as the ocean.
How precious is your mercy, O God!
So all people find refuge in the shadow of your wings.
For with you is the fountain of life
In your light we see light.

Alleluia!



C: Al—le—lu—ia! Al—le—lu—ia! Al—le—lu—ia!



These words are writ — ten that we may be—lieve that



Je—sus is the Christ, the Son — of God.



Al—le—lu—ia! Al—le—lu—ia! Al—le—lu—ia!

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women."

²⁹But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favor with God. ³¹Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end."

³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵The angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Listen, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age even though she was called barren, and this is her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible for God.”

³⁸Then Mary said, “See, I am the Lord’s servant. May it happen to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

P: This is the Word of our God!

Congregation responds

“Blest Be the God of Israel”
Christian Worship 275 st. 1

Blest be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free;
He visits and redeems us; he grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill his promise and bring his people peace.

Hymn of the Day

“Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”
Christian Worship 23

Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Root of Jesse, free
Your own from Satan’s tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save,
And bring them vict’ry o’er the grave. Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by your drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloom clouds of night,

And death's dark shadows put to flight. Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

Prepare, My Heart, Lord Jesus! _____

Sermon

2 Samuel 7:8-16

“God Keeps His Faithful Promise, Faithfully!”

To make David's name great
To bestow his mercy on all people

The Confession of Faith

(We join in the words of the Nicene Creed)

**C: 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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.**

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,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is
worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian 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!**

Pray, Praise, and Give Thanks!

Prayers for the Day

Special Prayers and Requests

Prayer for those receiving the Lord's Supper

The Lord's Prayer

(spoken with the pastor)

**C: 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.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory
are yours now and forever. Amen!**

Hymn of Preparation “Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared”
Christian Worship 312 st. 1 & 7

Lord Jesus Christ, you have prepared
This feast for our salvation;
It is your body and your blood,
And at your invitation
As weary souls with sin oppressed,
We come to you for needed rest,
for comfort and for pardon.

Grant that we worthily receive
Your supper, Lord, our Savior,
And, truly grieving for our sins,
May prove by our behavior
That we are thankful for your grace
And day by day may run our race
in holiness increasing.

Personal Prayer

Before Communion

Lord, I am not worthy to be a guest at your holy table. But you are the friend of sinners, and you will not cast me out. This bread is your body, which bore my sins upon the cross. This wine is your shed blood, which purified me from all guilt. At your invitation, I humbly come. Receive me, my Savior, forgive my sins, and restore the joy of your salvation. Amen.



The Sacrament

P: The Lord be with you.



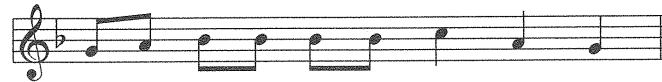
C: And al—so with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.



C: We lift them up to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.



C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P: Give praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Through his holy prophets, he proclaimed the promise of a coming Savior that he would keep faithfully. Now, through him, have come salvation, power, the kingdom of our God, and the authority to rule over all things. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks, honor and glory for ever and ever.

Holy, Holy, Holy

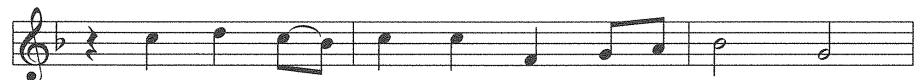
Sanctus



C: Ho—ly, ho—ly, ho—ly, is the Lord of hosts;



The whole earth is full of your glo—ry.



You are my God, and I will ex—alt you.



I will give you thanks, for you have be—come my sal-



va—tion. Ho—ly, ho—ly, ho—ly is the Lord of hosts.



The whole earth is full of your glo — ry.

The Words of Institution

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: “Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: “Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The Blessing of Peace

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



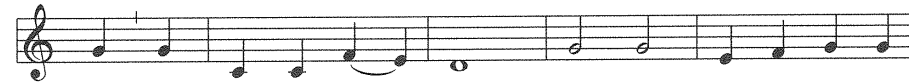
C: A ——— men.

O Christ, Lamb of God

Agnus Dei



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a—way the sin of the



world; have mer—cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you



take a—way the sin of the world; have mer—cy on us.



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a—way the sin of the



world; grant us your peace. A ——— men.

The Congregation may be seated for the Distribution

The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament through which Jesus Christ our Savior strengthens our faith and forgives our sins. In it we receive His actual body and blood, as we receive the bread and the wine. If you have not communed with us before or if you are not familiar with our procedure, please do not come to the Lord's Table today. We also encourage you to speak with our pastor following the service. He will be happy to share with you the necessary preparations to receive our Savior's body and blood in a future service.

Our request comes out of love for you and concern for your spiritual well-being, so that you can receive the blessing our Lord wants you to receive.

Thanksgiving

Song of Thanksgiving

(Congregation rises and sings)



Thank the Lord and sing his praise. Tell ev-'ry-one what he has done



Let all who seek the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-news his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu — ia!

Closing Prayer:

P: O dearest Jesus, how good are you are and how blessed you have made us. We have come burdened with our guilt, stained with sin, and humbled by our rebellion, and you have forgiven us. Through your gracious Word, together with your body and blood, you have declared all completely washed away. Make this good news the foundation for our life. As we daily struggle with temptation and sin, lead us to acknowledge our weakness and humbly confess our rebellion. Then, assure us we are forgiven and declared righteous for your sake. Make every blessing you secured by your death and resurrection our highest good, and the confidence of your never-failing presence. As we live in anticipation of your coming, be our comfort, our refuge, and our guide. Bless us, now and always, as we live in your love—our true, Triune and gracious God.



C: A ——— men.

The Benediction:

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you,

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.



C: A — men. A ——— men. A ——— men.

Closing Hymn “Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes”
Christian Worship 12

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev’ry heart prepare a throne
And ev’ry voice a song.

He comes the captive to release,
In Satan’s prison held.
The gates of brass before him burst;
The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
To enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Your welcome shall proclaim,
And heav’n’s eternal arches ring
With your beloved name.

Silent Prayer

Announcements

Today—*Welcome in Name of our promised and coming Savior, Jesus Christ!* What a blessing it is to hear of God the Father's faithfulness in keeping his promises to David, and to all people. May the Lord's undeserved love and faithfulness lead us to put our complete trust in him.

- If you are visiting today, please sign the guest book or a guest card, and worship again, soon!
- Following the worship service there will be time for fellowship over a cup of coffee.
- There will be no Bible Class this morning in lieu of the Christmas Eve service tonight.
- **Christmas Eve Worship at 7:00 pm.** Make this evening's service a special part of your celebration of Jesus' birth.

Monday—Christmas Day Worship at 9:30 am. The worship of our new-born Savior continues as we consider the "great" songs of Christmas. These were sung by believers of the past, and they continue to fill us with joy.

Friday—Office Hours from 10:30—2:30 pm

Saturday—Church Cleaning: Aitkins

- Lawn beginning December 24th—C. Schueler

Sunday, December 31st—Sunday Worship and Live Streaming at 9:30 am. As we continue our celebration of the Savior's birth, and as we prepare to enter a new year, we want to consider the blessings which are ours through our Savior. These are blessings which will guard, guide, and comfort us.

- There will be no Bible Class this morning.



OUR REDEEMER
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