

CALAMUS LUTHERAN PARISH

8:00 a.m. Worship at Our Savior's Lutheran Church

10:30 a.m. Worship at Faith Lutheran Church

First Sunday in Advent

November 29, 2020

Welcome in Jesus' name. Please consider using the prelude as a time for meditation and silent prayer. This is the ideal time for quiet preparation as we come to worship God.

Prelude

Ringling of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Hanging of the Christmas Greens

OPENING PRAYER

P: Our Father, we long for the simple beauty of Christmas – for all the old familiar melodies, words, and symbols that remind us of that great miracle when God who had made all things came one night as a babe, to lie in the crook of a woman's arm. But in that longing, let us even more yearn for your renewed presence among us even as we celebrate and expect the coming of your Son.

Before such mystery we kneel, as we follow shepherds and wise men to bring you the gift of our love – a love we confess that has not always been as warm or sincere or real as it should have been. Now, as we enter into this Advent season, we pray that love would find its beloved, and from you receive the grace to make it pure again, warm and real.

We bring you our gratitude for every token of your love, for all the ways you have heaped blessings upon us during the years that have gone. And we do pray, Lord Jesus, that as we begin this four-week journey of expectation and hope, we may do it in a manner well pleasing to you. May all we do and say, every tribute of our hearts, bring honor to your name, that we, your people, may remember your birth and feel your presence among us even yet.

May the loving kindness of this Advent season and the true spirit of Christmas not only creep into our hearts this season, but there abide, so that not even the return to earthly cares and responsibilities, not all the festivities of our own devising may cause it to creep away weeping. May the joy and spirit of Christmas remain with us now and forever. In the name of Jesus, who came to save his people from their sins, even in that lovely name we pray.

C: Amen.

THE MEANING OF THE SERVICE

P: As we begin the Christian year, we also celebrate the holy season known as Advent. It is a time when we prepare ourselves for the coming of our Messiah. Advent means “Coming.” We celebrate these days of Advent in expectation and preparation for Christ’s arrival.

Through the centuries, Christians have observed a time of waiting and expectation before celebrating the birth of the Savior at Christmas. The Advent season is a time for reflection and preparation, but its mood is joyful. Advent has been enriched by Christian tradition to reflect its distinctive Christian meaning. It proclaims the revelation of God’s love as expressed in Christ’s birth in a humble stable, his sacrificial death on the cross, and his victorious resurrection! It points to the hope of Christ’s coming again as the King of kings and Lord of lords. Advent makes innkeepers out of all of us, asking each of us to make room for the arrival of Christ the King. Let us, today, prepare him room in our hearts, our lives, and our homes!

Congregational Song: “Canticle of the Turning” (723)

**My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.**

**You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?**

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.**

LESSONS OF ADVENT

Over these next weeks of Advent, let us listen to the lessons of the years and the centuries, not just to impressions of the moment. The images in the biblical story are often discouraging - war, hate, famine, epidemics, a Caesar on his throne, a Paul in prison, Christians being persecuted. But now, after the centuries, the Caesar is gone; Paul is a symbol of faith; and Jesus, the Truth and the Light, is reaching out to every nation!

Let us, through the great traditions of our faith, join with the shepherds of Bethlehem, the wise men from the east, and the seekers throughout the ages, to welcome the One who came at Christmas. Let us at Christmastide bring our gifts to him, and may the message of our songs be "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill to peoples everywhere."

Congregational Song: "Prepare the Royal Highway" (264)

**Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story:
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!**

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

L: A reading from Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence —

² as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil —

to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

³ When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

⁴ From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.

⁵ You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.

⁶ We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

⁷ There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

⁸ Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

⁹ Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

² before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

³ Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

⁴ O LORD God of hosts,

how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

**⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.**

**⁶ You make us the scorn of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.**

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**¹⁷ But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.**

**¹⁸ Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.**

**¹⁹ Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

New Testament Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

L: A reading from 1 Corinthians.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶ just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

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

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

“But in those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,

²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶ Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸ “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he^l is near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

THE SANCTUARY EVERGREENS

The most striking and the most universal feature of Christmas is the use of evergreens in churches and homes. Among ancient Romans evergreens were an emblem of peace, joy, and victory. The early Christians placed them in their windows to indicate that Christ had

entered the home. Holly and ivy, along with pine, and fir are called evergreens because they never change color. They are ever-green, ever-alive, even in the midst of winter. They symbolize the unchanging nature of our God, and they remind us of the everlasting life that is ours through Christ Jesus.

Under Christian thought and sentiment, holly became widely used in church celebrations. Holly was considered as the burning bush, or a symbol of Mary whose being glows with the Holy Spirit. The red berries represented the blood drops from the cruel thorns in the crown of Jesus.

In Isaiah 60:13 we find these words: “The Glory of Lebanon shall come unto you, the fir tree, the pine tree and the box together, to beautify the place of your sanctuary.” Our forefathers called the procuring of these evergreens, “Bringing Home Christmas!”

Congregational Song: “Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”
(242)

**Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,
for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,
behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor,
to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heav’nly door
and lives now inside us forever.**

As the song is sung, the evergreens on the side walls are put in place.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Today, the Christmas tree is the center of our festivities. Glittering with lights and ornaments, it is a part of the beauty and meaning of Christmas. There are several legends and stories about the Christmas tree.

The first use of the Christmas tree was in the medieval German Paradise Plays, held outdoors and portraying the creation of humankind. The Tree of Life was a fir tree decorated with apples. Later other ornaments were hung upon them, such as paper flowers and gilded nuts. In England branches or whole trees were forced into bloom indoors for Christmas. From these beginnings the use of a tree at Christmas was established.

Martin Luther was perhaps the first to use a lighted tree. The story is told that on one Christmas Eve Martin Luther wandered outdoors and became enraptured with the beauty of the starry sky. Its brilliance and loveliness led him to reflect on the glory of the first Christmas Eve as seen in Bethlehem's radiant skies. Wishing to share with his wife and children the enchantment he had felt, he cut from the forest an evergreen, glistening with snow, and took it home. He placed upon it candles to represent the glorious heavens he had seen. The use of a candle-lighted tree spread to all Europe, then America came to regard it as the central ornament of Christmas.

Congregational Song: "I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve" (271 tune)

**When mother trims the Christmas tree
which fills the room with light,
she tells me of the wondrous Star
that made the dark world bright.**

**She says the Star is shining still,
and never will grow dim;
and if it shines upon my way,
it leads me up to him.**

After the song is sung, the tree lights are turned on.

THE CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA

Most Christmas greenery reflects European traditions. But one colorful plant, which looks like a flaming star, the poinsettia, is a native to the American continent. It was named after Dr. Joel Robert Poinset, an ambassador to Mexico who first introduced it to the United States in

1828. The people of Mexico and Central America call the brilliant tropical plant the “Flower of the Holy Night.” The poinsettia is a many-pointed star that has become a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem.

Congregational Song: “The King Shall Come” (260)

**The King shall come when morning dawns
and light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
come quickly, King of kings.**

As the song is sung, the flowers are placed on the altar.

THE PARAMENTS AND ADVENT COLORS

Both visual and performing arts have always been important ways to communicate the Christian faith. The use of music has helped believers understand their godly hope. Other forms of visual art have been used from the beginning to help express various aspects of Christian doctrine and life.

Colors, altar paraments or coverings, and banners are some of the most important visual ways Christians have used to express their faith in worship. The objective in covering the communion table with cloths of various colors was to help focus the attention of worshippers on the special nature of Christ as the Perfect Sacrifice. In the early days of Christian worship, Advent and Christmas were seen as a somber time, much like Lent is today. Purple table coverings were used to speak of Christ’s kingship, but the mood was somber.

As Christians began to share their celebration of Christmas with their non-Christian neighbors they began to focus on the joy of the Christmas event. As the emphasis of Christmas began to change to one of joyful celebration the color used also changed to express Christ the King in that more happy way. While purple is still used in some churches and at certain times, many Christian churches now use blue to speak of the

kingship of Christ when the occasion is joyful. At Advent we wait with anticipation and celebration for our coming Christ.

Congregational Song: “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” (249)

**On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and harken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!**

*As the song is sung, the paraments are changed to blue,
the color for Advent.*

THE ADVENT CANDLES

Advent is a time of expectation, and this is symbolized, not only by the four-week period of preparation, but also by the lighting of an Advent candle on each Sunday of the season. The flame of each new candle reminds us, the worshipers, that something is happening, and something more is still to come.

The candles are arranged in a circle to remind us of the continuous power of God, which knows neither beginning nor ending. There is also symbolism in the colors of the candles. The blue candles symbolize the coming of Christ from the royal line of David. He is coming as the King of Kings as well as the Prince of Peace. The large white candle in the center is known as the Christ candle, and points to Jesus as the Christ, the Light of the World.

A progression is noted in the lighting of the candles of the Advent wreath each Sunday. Each candle symbolizes various aspects of our waiting experience. The culmination of the season comes as we light the Christ candle on Christmas Eve. We join in rejoicing that the promise of long ago has been fulfilled.

First Sunday of Advent ~ Hope for Those Who Wait

P: Advent is a time for the human heart to wait, while trusting God's eternal time.

C: How long, O Lord, how long?

P: For those waiting for answered prayer:

C: Grant Your steadfast patience.

P: For those waiting in the face of uncertainty:

C: Grant unshakable confidence in your sovereign provision.

P: For those waiting for justice and mercy to reign:

C: Grant a glimpse of your glory in our wounded world.

P: For all of us waiting for God's kingdom to come:

**C: Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait,
the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.**

Candle Lighting

This morning we light the first candle which reminds us that throughout history, God's people have spent time waiting, wandering and wondering about the timing of God's eternal plan. Like the people of old, we long for God's presence to illuminate the areas of life where we are called to wait. This morning we echo the words of the Psalmist, "Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!" (Psalm 27:14)

"Christ, Be Our Light!"

Christ, be our light! Shine in our
hearts. Shine through the dark - ness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your
Church gath - ered to - day. _____

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody consists of half and quarter notes. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across measures. The final note of the fourth staff is followed by a long horizontal line, suggesting the song continues.

THE NATIVITY

One of the most heart-warming expressions of Christmas is the nativity. The nativity speaks of the mystery of God's wisdom. Why God chose to send his Son into our world as a baby of humble birth, born in common surroundings, we do not know. What we do know is that God reached out to all people including the poor and wealthy, the simple and the wise, the powerless and the powerful. All who found him knelt in humility before him. Knowing God is possible because he came to us, at our level. Whenever we see a nativity, we find ourselves with Mary and Joseph; with the shepherds, and with the wise men; bowing before the manger, overwhelmed by God's expression of love in coming to us.

Congregational Song: “Away in a Manger” (277)

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

After the song is sung, the nativity is put in place.

GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS

From the beginning of Christmas celebrations, gift giving has been a part of the season. The wise men gave out of their treasures, and the shepherds gave of themselves. Both express the gift of God in giving Christ as the Savior of the World.

Unique in our history of generous givers is the story of Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia in the fourth century A.D. He is reputed to have been wealthy, his emblem being three purses and three golden balls. This was the symbol of rich Italian families of his time. It survives today in the signs of some of our pawnshops. The good bishop gave his money away secretly to those whom he found in need. He was deeply interested in young people, giving his wealth especially to maidens whose lack of a dowry was affecting their matrimonial future, and to needy boys. Gifts coming from unknown sources were commonly attributed to him and parents customarily gave him credit for their gifts to their children.

The discovery of his generosity is said to have been made by the father of three dowry-less daughters. The eldest two each received from the chimney on successive nights a substantial gift of gold with her name on it. The father resolved to watch and see who their generous benefactor could be. His vigil revealed the good Saint Nicholas as the donor of the gifts. His name survives today as the human embodiment of unselfish giving.

Hanging up our stockings in pleasant anticipation of Santa's gifts may have originated from the fact that the maidens of this Bishopric of Myra, needing and expecting a dowry from the good Saint Nicholas, suspended a stocking to catch the money purse the generous bishop was sure to drop down the chimney.

Congregational Song: "What Child Is This" (296)

**Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!**

THE CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS

The greatest gift of Christmas is the gift of God in Christ Jesus. All that we do at this holy season points to that expression of holy love. Christ came as a babe in Bethlehem, God's gift at Christmas. As Christians we seek to pass on our heritage to our children and to those who, by faith in Christ, become part of the family of God. It is through the work of the Holy Spirit in your life and mine that the gift goes on.

Congregational Song: "Comfort, Comfort Now My People" (256)

**"Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over;
God will reign in peace forever.**

CONCLUDING PRAYER

P: O God, you have caused this world to shine with the illumination of the true Light. You have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him to reveal to us your glory and grace. As you have given this gift in love, may we receive it with joy. Grant that we, being regenerate and made your children by adoption and grace may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit. Grant us, we pray, that as we have known the mystery of that Light upon earth, so may we also reflect that light to a darkened world; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

C: 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.

THE BLESSING

P: May God direct your ways in peace,
make you abound in love for one another and for all,
and strengthen your hearts until the coming of our Lord Jesus.
Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen

Ring of the Bell
Postlude

Pastor: Rev. Roberta Pierce

Organist: Jason Bousselot or Linda Whitman, OS

Pianist: Rachel Bousselot, F

Lectors: Joe Morehead, OS; Heather Whitman, F

Ushers: Joe Morehead, OS; Larry and Marilyn Schau, F

Acolytes: Ryan Olson, OS; Kalloway Whitman, F

Altar Ministry: Larry and Marilyn Schau, F

Cleaners: Brian Bousselot and Mary Timmerman, OS

This Week At A Glance

Week starting November 29

Today 8:00 a.m. – Worship Service at Our Savior’s

10:30 a.m. – Worship Service at Faith

Sunday 8:00 a.m. – Worship Service at Our Savior’s

10:30 a.m. – Worship Service at Faith

✓ Sunday School and Confirmation classes are cancelled until January.

✓ There will not be mid-week Advent services this year. Pastor will provide a recorded message on Wednesdays. Go to the church website: www.clparish.org

Those to keep in prayer this week: residents and staff at Maggie’s House, Ole Olson, Betty Schau, Tim Burke, Jim Goddard, Ruth Braet, Barb Johnson, George Tulley, and Vicki Sharp; the homebound: Bus Seastrand, Rusty Porth, Ed Meadows, Norman Bousselot, Hazel Richards, Ron Gasper, Geri Schutt, Joan Shelton, and Myrna Kay Petersen; and those serving in the military.

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Church Facebook Page.....www.facebook.com/clparish1861

Pastor's Office.....246-2558

Pastor Roberta’s Cell Phone.....406-478-9518

Pastor Roberta’s Email Address.....prmbp10@gmail.com

Committee and organization reports for the congregations’ annual reports are due in the church office by Monday, December 14.

These reports include: Pastor, Council Presidents, and all Committees (Education, Christian Outreach, Memorial and Gifts, Property and Management, Our Savior’s Cemetery, and God Squad).

Financial reports, budgets, and audit reports are due in the church office by Monday, January 18, 2021. Thank You!