



Salem Lutheran Church
401 S. Lake St. Lake Mills IA 50450

Welcome to the House of the Lord

Fourth Sunday Of Advent
December 24, 2023 – 9:00am



OUR MISSION: We are God forgiven and mission driven.

OUR VISION: To be that Lake Mills Place where belonging, healing, growing, serving and believing are open to all, regardless of background, experience or aptitude. Central to this is that we are a -forgiving, mission-driven community, which means we all want to have an impact, shaped by the love of Christ to serve all others.

Sunday—9:00am Worship Service

Preaching: Pastor Judith Wozniak

Organist: Ruth Sheldon

Reader: Margaret Okland

Sound: Bruce Adams

Live Stream: Brad Evenson

Acolytes: Braylon Hanson, Jaden Swanson

Liturgical Choir:

Communion Servers:

Worship Coordinator: Shannon Bruhns

Ushers: Lyle & Orloue Thomson, Al Sterrenberg

Altar Guild for December: All Members

**The Live Stream Broadcast Is Given In Loving Memory
of Michael Gardner From His Family**

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INTRODUCTION

God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."

GATHERING

PRELUDE

BELLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(**Please be seated for the lighting of the Advent Candle.)*

ADVENT CANDLE *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah* ELW #240

We will sing all verses as four candles are lit on this Fourth Sunday in Advent.



- 1 Light one can - dle to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

PRAYER

We praise you, O God, for this advent candle that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first four candles, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

(****Please stand as you are able.*)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.

Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

(****Please stand as you are able.*)

GATHERING HYMN

Signs and Wonders

ELW #672



- 1 Signs and won - ders lead the danc - ing from the heart God frees from fear:
- 2 Hope and free - dom join the cir - cle: Mar - y to the gar - den came,
- 3 Cast a - side all fear and hid - ing; hand in hand we dance the round.



wings of an - gels greet the mai - den, and God finds a dwell - ing here;
saw the ra - diance of the mar - vel, heard the Ris - en call her name;
God is with us, Christ, a - bid - ing, and the Spir - it's gifts a - bound.



bold - ly may we lift our hands, bow the head, and voice A - men;
bold - ly may we heed Christ's call, step be - yond the gar - den wall:
Called by God to ho - li - ness, let us bold - ly serve and bless;



thus does glo - ry shine at mid - night: o - pen hearts in - vite the star - light.
beau - ti - ful the feet pro - ceed - ing with good news of death's de - feat - ing.
and to hearts that sigh and hun - ger may our lives dance signs and won - ders.

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.**

*(***Please be seated.)*

CHILDREN'S TIME

WORD

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.

⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people

Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Word of God, Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Luke 1:46b-55

We will speak today's psalm responsively beginning with the lector women.

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, ⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: ⁴⁹**you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name.**

⁵⁰You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation. ⁵¹**You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,** ⁵²**casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.**

⁵³You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴**You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy,** ⁵⁵**the promise made to our forebears, to Abraham and his children forever.**

SECOND READING

Romans 16:25-27

²⁵Now to God 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 kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Word of God, Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

*(**Please stand as you are able.)*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p.151



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The 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. ³⁶And 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. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then 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.

(****Please be seated.*)

SERMON

(****Please stand as you are able.*)

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."

(****Please be seated.*)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever. Bring your church into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together in caring for our world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to thrive, that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow wealth, power, or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill (*especially*). Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You are pleased to make your home among us. Make our homecomings joyful as we gather with friends, families, and chosen families in celebration. Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy (*especially*). Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is made known. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE



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POINSETTIAS

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF TRAVIS HOFFMAN
FROM HIS FAMILY**

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF KURTIS & VERNA HELGESON
FROM THEIR FAMILY**

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF ALFRED & TRUDIE JENSON
FROM DOUG & SHANNON BRUHNS**

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF MICHAEL GARDNER
FROM HIS FAMILY**

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF ERNIE AND MIKE
FROM SUE LANGERUD**

