

Fourth Sunday of Advent



Word and Sacrament

“Little Church with a BIG Heart”

Saint Bartholomew Lutheran Church

December 21, 2025 11:00AM



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Welcome to Worship!

This morning we celebrate the **Fourth Sunday of Advent**. The lyrics to the hymns are in the red hymnals in the pews.

We extend special greetings to all our guests who are with us today. Your presence, along with our members and friends, is truly valued. Know that all of God's people are always welcome here at St. Bartholomew.

Holy Communion

Saint Bart's celebrates the real presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. We invite all to come and share. At the time of communion, you will come up to the Altar and receive the elements.

Praying People

Everyone is invited to offer their prayer concerns during the Prayers of the Church.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

Announcements

We will have a **children's sermon** today. Afterwards, children will leave for the **nursery** and return to the church for Communion.

Our Christmas Eve **Candlelight Service** will be Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

There will be no **RAWtools shop, Servicio en Español, or Enid's Pantry** this weekend.

Next Sunday will be **Lessons & Carols** (no Communion) followed by all-parish potluck.

Tuesday, December 30 is **Martha's Breakfast** at Pat's Diner at 9 a.m. Please sign up on the list downstairs.

The **Eternal Candle** is lit in December in honor of **Diane Erga**, donated by Rolf Erga.

We can use any food or monetary donations to help our community in need.

Are there any other announcements?

Bell/Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Advent Litany

Week Four: Love

Reader One: Because too many people are wandering in the wilderness, because too many people are sitting in the valley of the shadow of death, because too many of our conversations are laced with conflict and bitterness, we light candles...

Reader Two: Because people all over the world are suffering, and we're often too distracted to notice, we light candles...

Reader One: One for hope, one for peace, one for joy, and one for love... (*Light the fourth candle in Advent wreath.*)

Reader Two: May the light from these candles overwhelm the world.

Reader One: May the light from these candles illuminate the valley of the shadow of death.

Reader Two: And may the fire from these candles burn away whatever would prevent God's love from being born among us.

Reader One: Friends, be not afraid, even now — even now — God's love is overwhelming the world, on earth as it already is in heaven!

P Long-expected God,
C we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.

P God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.

✝ You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.

C **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: ELW # 265

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



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."

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924
 Music: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE, Basque carol

APOSTOLIC GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
 and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

Kyrie



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

Canticle of Praise



1 Glo - ry be to God in heav - en; peace, good - will to all the earth.



Might - y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Prayer Of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Children's Sermon and Nursery

WORD

A I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth (Psalm 34:1). Lord, bless the reading of your word. Make it come alive in our midst.

C **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.”

¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also?”

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

A Word of God, word of life.

C Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

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

C ² In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.

A ³ Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

C ⁴ O LORD God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

A ⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

C ⁶ You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

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

C ¹⁷ Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.

A ¹⁸ And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

C ¹⁹ **Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Word of God, word of life.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation



P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 1st chapter.
C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”

²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

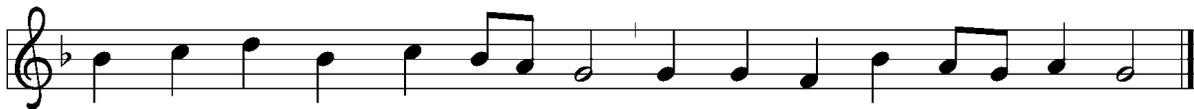
SERMON

Hymn of the Day: ELW # 263

Savior of the Nations, Come



- 1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
- 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
- 3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child—from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
- 4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path-way leads;



- Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

- 5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.

- 6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340–397; Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. hymnal version
Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524
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PEACE

- P** The peace of Christ be with you always.
C **And also with you**

Apostle's Creed

P Let us all affirm our faith by using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS

Each petition ends:

A God of grace, **C** hear our prayer.

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

In the anticipation of these days, prepare our hearts for your arrival. Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You send your saving grace and peace to the nations. Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good, *especially in Palestine, Israel, Ukraine, Sudan, and the United States*. May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill (*especially Joe, Nick, Bob, Justin, Billy, Gloria, Rosemary, Nelson, Tom, Shirley, Rich, Heather, and Gail*). God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support. Bless young children and new parents. Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for our partner churches: Abiding Presence and Prince of Peace; We pray for our Bishop Christa Compton; We also pray for the concerns of this congregation: those who travel, those absent from worship, those celebrating birthdays, *especially Maria Ramirez*, and for those celebrating anniversaries; also for the people of God in this place and for other needs in our community. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

At this time, you may offer up prayers for loved ones, thanksgivings to God, or any other intercessions silently or aloud... **(Pause)** God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service. Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your love. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

(Pastor) Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

C Amen.

THE OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

A Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.

C Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

C It is right to give thanks and praise.

PREFACE

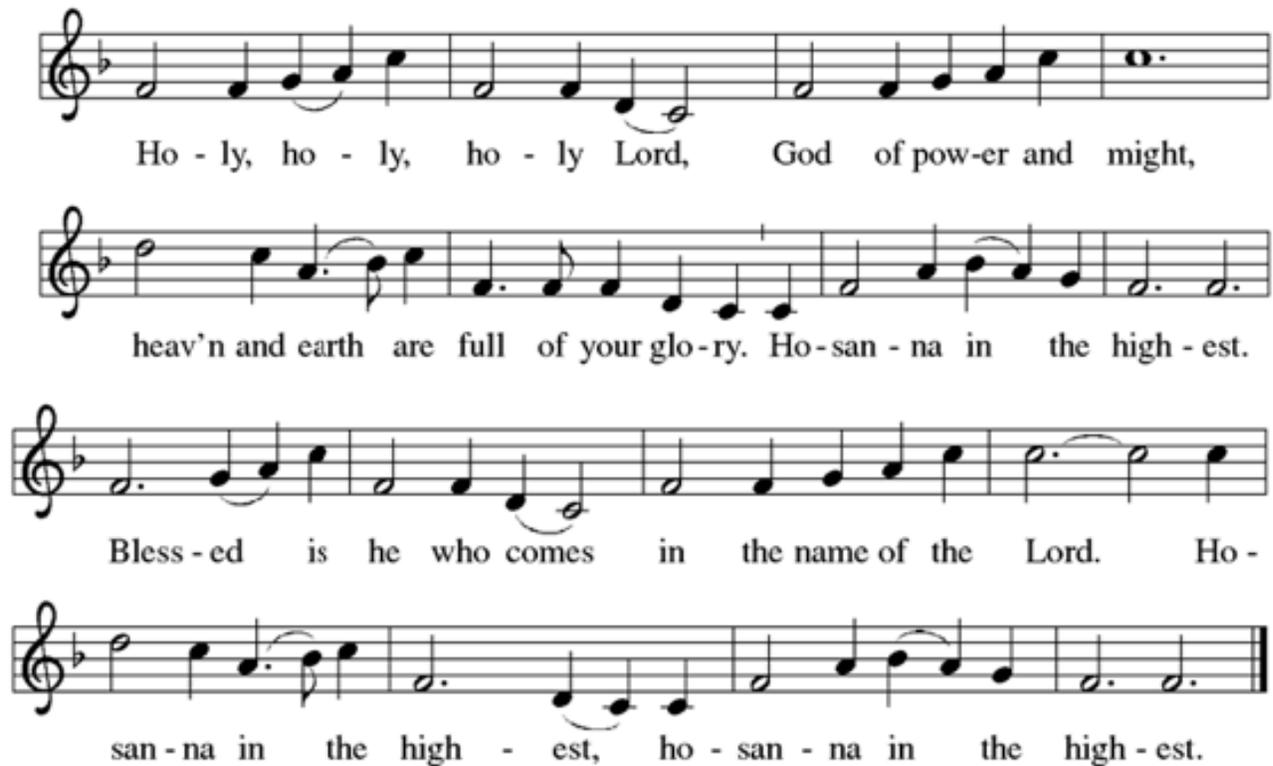
P It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

He is the one foretold by all the prophets,
whom the Virgin Mother bore with love beyond all telling.

John the Baptist was his herald
and made him known when at last he came.

In his love Christ fills us with joy
as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
so that when he comes again he may find us watching in prayer,
our hearts filled with wonder and praise.

And so, with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your glory,
and join in their unending hymn of praise.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER AND WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

C Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,

Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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, the power, and the glory, now and forever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Here is life. God is with us.
Come, receive what God has promised.

All are welcome at God's Table. If you would like to share in communion with us today, you are more than welcome to do so. There are no prerequisites at God's table and nothing we do to earn a seat at the table, it is freely given to us by God. Please, come and eat!

Distribution

TABLE BLESSING

P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

C **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

C **Amen.**

+Sending+

Benediction

P May God who comes among us,
Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.

C **Amen.**

Sending Hymn: ELW # 723

Canticle of the Turning



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.



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

P Go in peace. Keep awake.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude