Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, December 4, 2022 •

Second Sunday of Advent



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COLORED BY ERIN CASSEL

WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: The Apple Tree Chamber Choir

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be God's name forever.

C Amen.

P Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of new beginnings,

C we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.

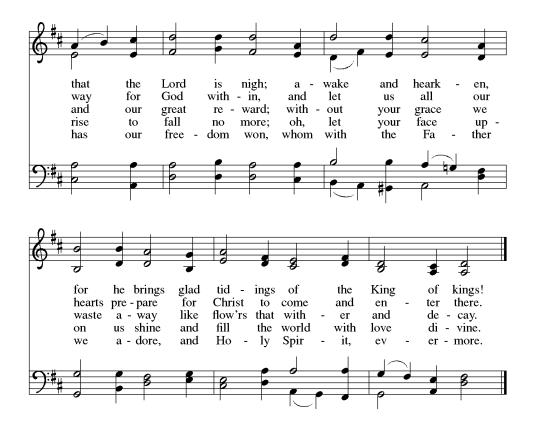
P People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on + Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

All Stand & Sing





Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

PRESENTATION FOR HOLY BAPTISM

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

The presiding minister addresses baptismal candidate and sponsors:

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to be baptized into Christ?

Response:

I do.

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have Abigale Sophia Fabbiano baptized into Christ?

As you bring Abby to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with her among God's faithful people,

bring her to the word of God and the holy supper,

teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,

place in her hands the holy scriptures,

and nurture her in faith and prayer,

so that Abby may learn to trust God,

proclaim Christ through word and deed,

care for others and the world God made,

and work for justice and peace.

Do you promise to help Abby grow in the Christian faith and life?

Response:

I do.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

People of God, do you promise to support Abby by praying for her in her new life in Christ?

C We do.

The assembly stands.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

- P Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?
- C I renounce them.
- P Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?
- C I renounce them.
- P Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?
- C I renounce them.
- P Do you believe in God the Father?
- C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
- P Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?
- C 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.

- P Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?
- C 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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

- P The Lord be with you.
- C And also with you.
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C It is right to give our thanks and praise.
- P Blessed are you, O God, maker and ruler of all things. Your voice thundered over the waters at creation. You water the mountains and send springs into the valleys to refresh and satisfy all living things.

Through the waters of the flood you carried those in the ark to safety. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery to freedom. In the wilderness you nourished them with water from the rock, and you brought them across the river Jordan to the promised land.

By the baptism of his death and resurrection, your Son Jesus has carried us to safety and freedom. The floods shall not overwhelm us, and the deep shall not swallow us up, for Christ has brought us over to the land of promise. He sends us to make disciples, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Pour out your Holy Spirit; wash away sin in this cleansing water; clothe the baptized with

Christ; and claim your daughters and sons, no longer slave and free, no longer male and female, but one with all the baptized in Christ Jesus, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The assembly may be seated.

BAPTISM

- P Abigale Sophia Fabbiano, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen. You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized. Alleluia.
- P Sustain Abby with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C Amen.

P Abigale Sophia Fabbiano, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

C Amen.

WELCOME

A Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

A Let us welcome the newly baptized.

C We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God creative and redeeming word to all the world.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

All Stand & Sing



2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954 Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

We invite children to come forward for a children's message before moving to children's church.

FIRST READING Isaiah 11:1-10

A reading from the eleventh chapter of Isaiah.

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

¹A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,

or decide by what his ears hear;

⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;

he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Romans 15:4-13

A reading from the fifteenth chapter of Romans.

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

⁴Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name";

¹⁰and again he says,

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people";

¹¹and again,

"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,

and let all the peoples praise him";

¹²and again Isaiah says,

"The root of Jesse shall come,

the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;

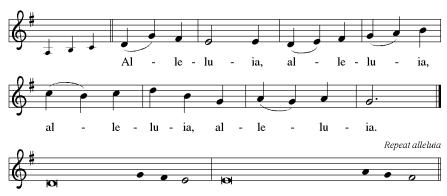
in him the Gentiles shall hope."

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- A The word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL VERSE

All Stand & Sing



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e-ter-nal life.

GOSPEL Matthew 3:1-12

- P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the third chapter.
- C Glory to you, O Lord.

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight."

⁴Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹"I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

- P The gospel of the Lord.
- C Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON Pastor Micah

Silence is Kept for Reflection.



Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt. Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

God, you renew the church in every age. We give thanks for hymn writers and theologians (*especially John of Damascus, whom we commemorate today*). Inspire teachers, writers, and musicians to delight and instruct your people. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You give us a vision of creation in harmony, when hurting and destruction will be no more. Teach us to be stewards of the earth and companions to its creatures. Restore to balance and wholeness what human greed has harmed. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You defend the cause of all who are poor and oppressed. Raise up leaders who will govern with equity and serve the common good. Guide judges, lawmakers, and public officials to protect the rights of those who cannot advocate for themselves. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

You deliver those in need from suffering and fear. Come to the aid of any who are exploited or abused, especially children, elders, and victims of human trafficking. Provide safety and help to our neighbors without shelter, refugees, and those fleeing violence. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You urge your people to welcome one another as you have welcomed us. Nurture ministries of hospitality and care in this and every. We pray for people who are homebound, hospitalized, or separated from loved ones. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You embrace all who have died trusting in your promises, and we give thanks for their faithful witness. Sustain us in hope until we are united with them in the joy of your eternal presence. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: In A Far-Off Place Jesus Comes to Earth Church Choir



Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Music: TENTH NIGHT, Sally Ann Morris, b. 1952

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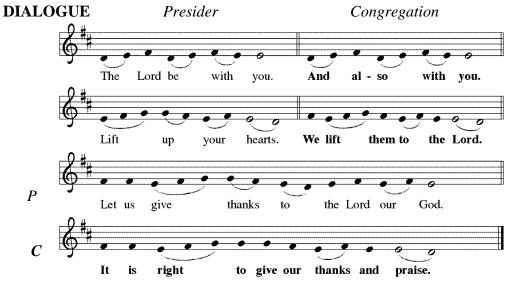


Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944
Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958
Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.
Outside USA: Arr. from *The English Hymnal*. © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.

OFFERING PRAYER

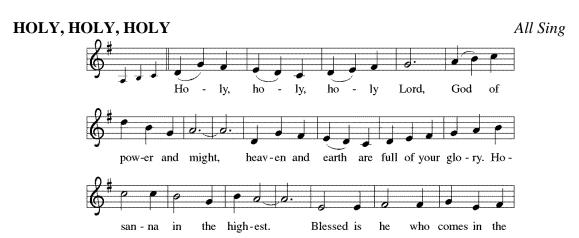
A Let us pray.

C Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.



PREFACE

P ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:





THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

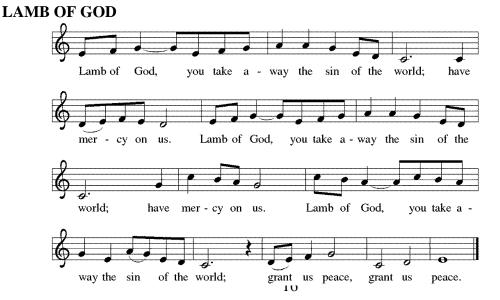
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

C Thanks be to God.



All Sing



COMMUNION

During communion the congregation is invited forward by rows, beginning in the back, and will receive the bread and wine at the front of the aisle. You may either eat and drink then, or return to your seat to do so, and place the cups in the bin in your pew.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming All Sing



- P The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
- C Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

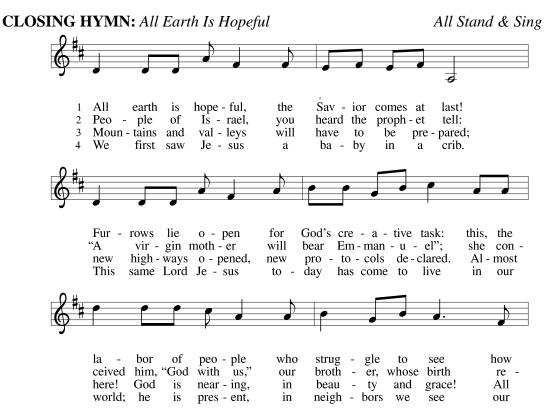
A Let us pray.

C Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

P God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, + bless you now and forever.

C Amen.





God's truth and jus-tice set ev - 'ry - bod-y free. stores hope and cour-age to chil - dren of this earth. clear ev - 'ry gate-way, in haste, come out in haste!

Je - sus is with us, and ev

ev-er sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946 Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé Spanish text and tune © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

SENDING

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: Angels from the Realm of Glory

Johnson

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This Week's Schedule: Sunday, December 4th

9:30 am - Sunday School

10:10 am - Church Choir in balcony

10:30 am - Worship in the Sanctuary

5:00 pm - Handbell practice

5:00 pm - HCY meets

6:00 pm - Choir practice

Wednesday, December 7th

5:30 pm - Youth Handbell Practice

6:00 pm - Advent Meal

6:45 pm - Unfailing Light Service

In-person and streamed

7:15 pm - Chamber Choir

Thursday, December 8th

10:30 am - Prime Timers @ The home of Lyn & Ann Miller

^{*}Special thanks to our Lector, Jenn Kearney.

^{**}The alter flowers were given by Tim and Shelia Kelly to glorify God and celebrate Nathan Kelly's and Madison Kelly's birthdays.



"Journeying through faith in a joyful, safe community, welcoming and serving Belmont and beyond."

Our core values are: Embrace, Grow, Connect, and Give

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

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Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 2:00 pm

Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: mkearney@holyc.org
Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - email: rforst@holyc.org
Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster
Chelsea Spicer, Office Manager