

Worship
Second Sunday in Advent

December 3, 2023
8:30 & 9:45am



Good Shepherd
LUTHERAN CHURCH
651-451-6225
www.goodshepherdigh.com

Welcome to Worship

Whether one's feet are big or small, fresh or worn, running or crawling,
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is:
Together on the Journey, Sharing God's Love

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEMPLE TALK

CALL TO WORSHIP

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

- P. Family of Faith, one of the greatest joys of worship is that it is not a solo act.
We gather together. We find joy, and God, in the act of connection. So, as we begin our
worship, I invite you to turn and face someone you are near to so that you can see one
another. Now repeat these phrases after me:
- P. Welcome to worship.
C. **Welcome to worship.**
P. I am glad you're here.
C. **I am glad you're here.**
P. Surely God is in this place.
C. **Surely God is in this place.**
P. I see God in your face.
C. **I see God in your face.**
P. Let us worship together.
C. **Let us worship together.**

ADVENT RESPONSE *"Joy to the World"*

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let ev'ry heart prepare
him room and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and
heav'n and nature sing.**

CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

- P. How does a weary world practice peace?
C. **By listening before we speak and saying sorry when we need to.**
P. By advocating for justice and caring for our neighbor.
By practicing Sabbath and forgiving seventy times seven.
C. **By choosing grace over hate and opening the door for each other.**
P. There are a million ways to practice peace.
So today we light the candle of peace as a reminder and a charge:
C. **With God's help, may we bring peace into a weary world. Amen.**

SONG *"Rejoice, Rejoice Believers"*

**Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear; the evening is advancing, and
darker night is near. The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh. Up, pray
and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.**

Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear; arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere. With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L. The Lord is with you.

C. And also with you.

L. Let us pray together,

C. Loving God, the source of our joy, as we turn our hearts toward your Word, we ask that you would soften us. Soften the callouses on our hearts. Weave yourself in between the cracks in our spirits. And plant hope where there is room. And as you do this, like flowers toward the sun, we will turn ourselves toward you, eager to hear a Word so good that we cannot help but ask ourselves, "how can this be?" With openness and gratitude, we pray, amen.

BIBLE READING Luke 1:1-23

Many people have already applied themselves to the task of compiling an account of the events that have been fulfilled among us. They used what the original eyewitnesses and servants of the word handed down to us. Now, after having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, I have also decided to write a carefully ordered account for you, most honorable Theophilus. I want you to have confidence in the soundness of the instruction you have received.

During the rule of King Herod of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah. His wife Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron. They were both righteous before God, blameless in their observance of all the Lord's commandments and regulations. They had no children because Elizabeth was unable to become pregnant and they both were very old. One day Zechariah was serving as a priest before God because his priestly division was on duty. Following the customs of priestly service, he was chosen by lottery to go into the Lord's sanctuary and burn incense. All the people who gathered to worship were praying outside during this hour of incense offering. An angel from the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw the angel, he was startled and overcome with fear.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah. Your prayers have been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will give birth to your son and you must name him John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many people will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the Lord's eyes. He must not drink wine and liquor. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before his birth. He will bring many Israelites back to the Lord their God. He will go forth before the Lord, equipped with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will turn the hearts of fathers back to their children, and he will turn the disobedient to righteous patterns of thinking. He will make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? My wife and I are very old." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in God's presence. I was sent to speak to you and to bring this good news to you. Know this: What I have spoken will come true at the proper time. But because you didn't believe, you will remain silent, unable to speak until the day when these things happen."

Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they wondered why he was in the sanctuary for such a long time. When he came out, he was unable to speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he gestured to them and couldn't speak. When he completed the days of his priestly service, he returned home.

SONG *"Prepare the Royal Highway"*

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!

(9:45) SKIT Zechariah Meets an Angel

REFLECTION Pastor Leesa Soderlind (We Acknowledge our Weariness)

SONG *"In the Bleak Midwinter"*

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign; in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb; if I were a wiseman I would do my part; yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe in a God who makes room for us –
who opens the door,
pulls up a seat,
puts the kettle on, and says,
"Tell me everything."**

**We believe that God not only treats us this way
but also makes room for our neighbors,
for strangers,
and for our enemies.**

**Jesus modeled this kind of
room-making love when he said,
"Let the children come to me,"
and, "Let me wash your feet,"
so we try to follow suit.**

**In a world of closed doors,
we believe in saying,
"There is room for you here."**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The following is said after each prayer petition

L. God, you are in our midst.

C. **Your weary world rejoices.**

OFFERING RECEIVED

(Those who are able, please stand)

OFFERTORY SONG

Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we, let all within us praise His holy name; Christ is the Lord. Oh, praise His name forever! His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim! His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim.

HOLY COMMUNION

THE 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.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Special Music

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king." The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world. Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing, and ever o'er its babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow: look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing; oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!

For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old, when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold, when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

COMMUNION BLESSING

COMMUNION PRAYER

God of angel choruses, we have gathered around your table remembering the ways you always make room for us. You are always pulling up chairs, welcoming the children, the tax collectors, and the outcast. At your dinner party, no one gets turned away. Help us to carry that inclusive spirit into the rest of our lives, for we know that love like that is what turns weariness into joy. With grateful hearts we pray, amen.

BLESSING

- L. Family of Faith,
as you leave this place,
you go into a weary world –
so speak tenderly.
Do the good that is yours to do.
Choose connection.
Hold onto hope.
And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.
You are God's beloved.
- C. **We are God's beloved.**
Amen.

SONG *"The Bells of Christmas"*

**The bells of Christmas chime once more; the heav'nly guest is at the door. He comes
to earthly dwellings still with new year gifts of peace, good will.**

**Oh, join with me, in gladness sing, to keep our Christmas with our king, until our
song, from loving souls, like rushing mighty water rolls!**

DISMISSAL

- L. Go, God's beloved!
- C. **We go rejoicing.**
The world needs it.
Amen.

POSTLUDE

This Week Please Pray For:

Travis Rieck, long recovery after major fall injury/surgery
Gary Erdman, hospice
Fernando, Hospice (father of Ivonne Dickerson)
Ken Peterson, long term care, after heart attack
Armon Roschen, healing (father of Kim McMonigal)
Melanie Benter, chemotherapy
Kori Heil, recovering at home after hospitalization
Dee Johnson, hospitalized pneumonia
Paul Rettinger, transitional care
Carl Baumeister, hip replacement surgery
Stephen Gossett, hospitalized with pneumonia (brother of Joan Killeen)
Bruce Bentson, hospice