



Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 am - December 21, 2025

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

PRELUDE

Wachet Auf - J.S. Bach

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS & TEMPLE TALK

Welcome to Messiah

We are a community of grace where we live out Jesus' commandment to love God with our whole heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We also seek to be a welcoming community for all people. This includes people of every race, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic background, economic grouping, religious affiliation, and political persuasion. We do this simply because God created all people in God's own image and Christ Jesus came so all people might have abundant life. We may not always be perfect, but this is our intention--all are welcome!

*Please stand as comfortable, in body or in spirit. The presiding minister will read the sections in plain text. **You are invited to read the bold portions.***

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

In a world full of fear, how do we love boldly?

We love by standing up for the oppressed, by speaking truth, by offering grace, by showing up.

Love is more than a feeling—it's an action.

Today we light the candle of love as a commitment to love boldly, fully, and well.

Hear these words of the Prophet Micah:

*"What does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?"*

—Micah 6:8

Thanks be to God! Amen.

247 "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" *all verses*



| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| | <i>O - so - sŏ</i> | <i>o - so - sŏ,</i> | <i>pyong - hwa - ŭi</i> | - | <i>im - gŭm</i> |
| 1 | Come now, O | Prince of peace, | make us one | bod - y. | |
| 2 | Come now, O | God of love, | make us one | bod - y. | |
| 3 | Come now and | set us free, | O God, our | Sav - ior. | |
| 4 | Come, Hope of | u - ni - ty, | make us one | bod - y. | |



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---|------|---|----|-----|---|------|-----|---|----|---|------|------|---|-----|---|--------|
| u | - | ri | - | ga | han | - | mom | i | - | ru | - | ge | ha | - | so | - | sö. |
| Come, | O | Lord | | | Je | - | sus, | rec | - | on | - | cile | your | | peo | - | ple. |
| Come, | O | Lord | | | Je | - | sus, | rec | - | on | - | cile | your | | peo | - | ple. |
| Come, | O | Lord | | | Je | - | sus, | rec | - | on | - | cile | all | | na | - | tions. |
| Come, | O | Lord | | | Je | - | sus, | rec | - | on | - | cile | all | | na | - | tions. |

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Friends, every day we are given choices—
 the choice to be a friend, to be an ally, to extend a welcoming hand.
 Some days we choose wisely, but from time to time, we inevitably get it wrong.

That is one of the many reasons we need the Prayer of Confession.
 In this moment of prayer, we are able to practice the art of forgiveness.
 So join me in this transformative moment.
 Join me receiving grace. Let us pray.

When you were afraid,
 did I stay by your side?
 Did I offer my hand,
 or did I leave you alone?

When you were afraid,
 did I choose solidarity?
 Did I see your fear,
 or did I only see mine?

Friend, none of us are perfect. We all make mistakes.

Fortunately, God offers grace, and we do too.

So take a deep breath, and let's start again.

Thank you. Your mercy is a gift.

Now we must ask—

 when you were afraid,
 did we stay by your side?
 Did we offer our hands,
 or did we leave you alone?

When you were afraid,
 did we choose solidarity?

Did we see your fear?

Or did we only see ours?

Friends, none of us are perfect. We all make mistakes.

Fortunately, God offers grace, and I do too.

So take a deep breath, and let's start again.

Thank you. Your mercy is a gift.

We accept your grace and would love to start again.

May it be so, with God's help.

Alleluia, Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

#906 "No Wind at the Window"



1 No wind at the win - dow, no knock on the door;
 2 "O Mar - y, O Mar - y, don't hide from my face.
 3 This child must be born that the king - dom might come:
 4 No pay - ment was prom - ised, no prom - is - es made;



no light from the lamp - stand, no foot on the floor;
 Be glad that you're fa - vored and filled with God's grace.
 sal - va - tion for man - y, de - struc - tion for some;
 no wed - ding was dat - ed, no blue - print dis - played.



no dream born of tired - ness, no ghost raised by fear:
 The time for re - deem - ing the world has be - gun,
 both end and be - gin - ning, both mes - sage and sign;
 Yet Mar - y, con - sent - ing to what none could guess,



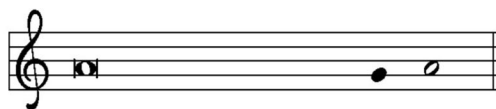
just an an - gel and a wom - an and a voice in her ear.
 and . . . you are re - quest - ed to . . . moth - er God's Son."
 both . . . vic - tor and . . . vic - tim, both . . . yours and di - vine.
 re - plied with con - vic - tion. "Tell . . . God I sav ves."

GREETING

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

KYRIE

p. 147 ELW "Kyrie"



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



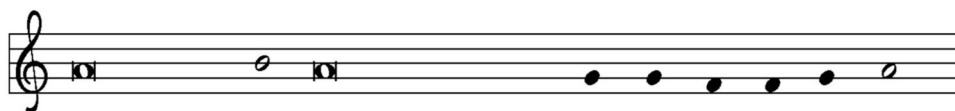
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Immanuel, We turned off alarm clocks. We poured cups of coffee. We slipped shoes onto our feet and combed back fly-away hairs. We traveled to this room and settled into this space, all in hopes of drawing closer to you. So as we hear your Word read aloud, help us to feel your presence in our midst. For we are reaching out our hands. We are reaching out our hearts. Speak to us now. With hope we pray, **Amen.**

Please
be seat-
ed.

HANDBELL CHOIR

"On Jordan's Banks/People, Look East!"

FIRST READING

Isaiah 41:5-10

⁵The coastlands have seen and are afraid;
the ends of the earth tremble;

they have drawn near and come.
⁶ Each one helps the other,
 saying to one another, "Take courage!"
⁷ The artisan encourages the goldsmith,
 and the one who smooths with the hammer encourages the one who strikes
 the anvil,
 saying of the soldering, "It is good,"
 and they fasten it with nails so that it cannot be moved.
⁸ But you, Israel, my servant,
 Jacob, whom I have chosen,
 the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
⁹ you whom I took from the ends of the earth
 and called from its farthest corners,
 saying to you, "You are my servant;
 I have chosen you and not cast you off";
¹⁰ do not fear, for I am with you;
 do not be afraid, for I am your God;
 I will strengthen you; I will help you;
 I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
 shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
² **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,**
stir up your strength and come to help us.
³ Restore us, O God;
 let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
⁴ **O LORD God of hosts,**
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?
⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
 you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
⁶ **You have made us the derision of our neighbors,**
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

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

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

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:

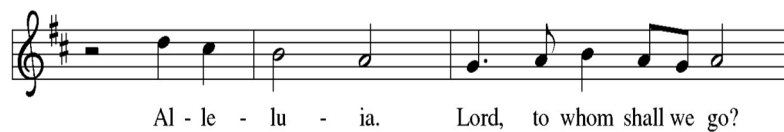
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Please
stand as
you are
comfortable in
body or
spirit.



GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ!

Please
be seated.

SERMON

MEDITATIVE MUSIC (*instrumental*)

"Of the Father's Love Begotten"

APOSTLES' CREED

Please
stand as
you are
comfort-
able in
body or
spirit.

**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 OF INTERCESSION

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.

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. 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... 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 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.**

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

Please
be seated.

Please
stand
as you
are
comfortable
in body
or spirit.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM

"Above the Hills The Advent Light"

OFFERING PRAYER

God of trembling hearts and trembling hands, we bring these offerings—fragments of our lives, symbols of our hope—trusting that you will bless and multiply them for work that casts out fear and makes room for love. As we now draw near to your table, remind us that generosity is not just a moment but a way of life, and that your good news is louder than fear. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

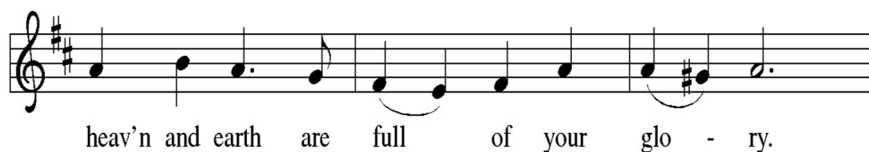
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy

...we lift our voices in praise, joining their unending hymn:





in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

...

As we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we remember Christ's love—
not distant,
But poured out in every time of fear.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Come now, Holy Spirit.

... In Christ's name we pray. **Amen.**

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 HYMNS

“Lamb of God”

Please be
seated.



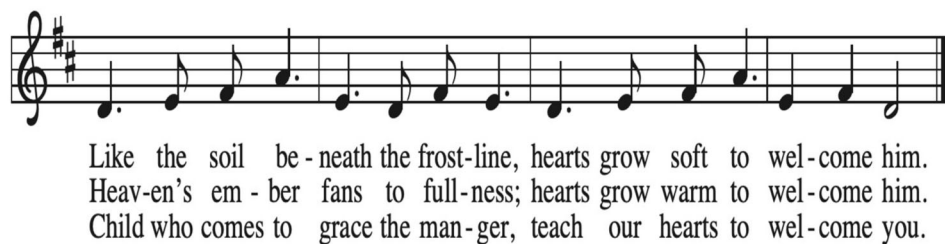
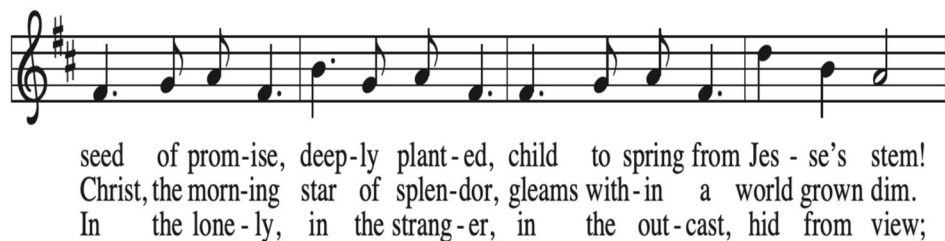
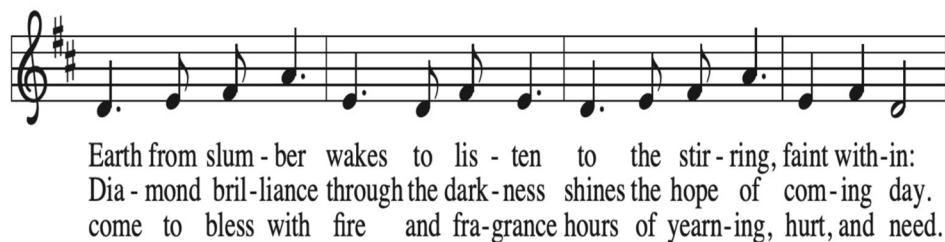
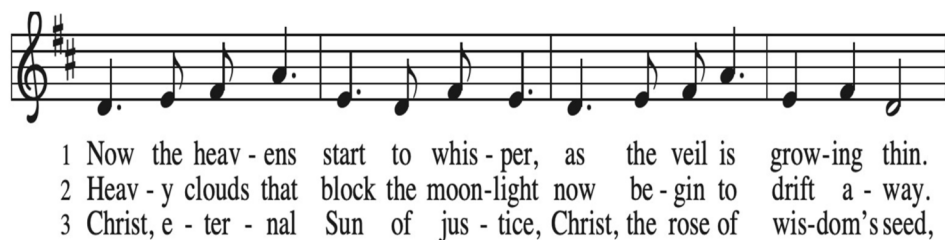
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



#901 "Now the Heavens Start to Whisper"



#907 "Filled with Hope and Gratitude"



1 Filled with hope and grat - i - tude and filled with ver - y
 2 God's e - ter - nal mer - cy, meant for all of hu - man -
 3 Hun - gry peo - ple eat good things and find an hon - ored
 4 Filled with hope and grat - i - tude and filled with ver - y



God, I sing with soul and spir - it ex - ul -
 kind, is giv - en as de - liv - 'rance from op -
 place; the rich are sent a - way though they are
 God, I sing with soul and spir - it ex - ul -



ta - tion, for God has smiled up -
 pres - sion. The pow - er - ful and
 hun - gry. The prom - ise to our
 ta - tion, for God has smiled up -



on the hum - ble ser - vant who will give her
 haugh - ty find that they are now cast down, the
 fore - bears God re - news for us to - day: the
 on the hum - ble ser - vant who will give her



own sweet milk to Christ, the world's sal - va - tion.
 low - ly raised be - yond this world's de - ri - sion.
 world is filled with God's a - bun - dant mer - cy.
 own sweet milk to Christ, the world's sal - va - tion.

Please
 stand as
 you are
 comfortable
 in body or
 spirit.

POST COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Whatever fear you carry,
you do not carry it alone.

Go—
with love that speaks louder than fear,
with hands open to grace,
with just enough courage for today.

The good news is still true.
God is still here.
You are not alone.

In the name of the One who calls you, •
walks with you,
and goes ahead of you—
go in peace.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

#264 “Prepare the Royal Highway”



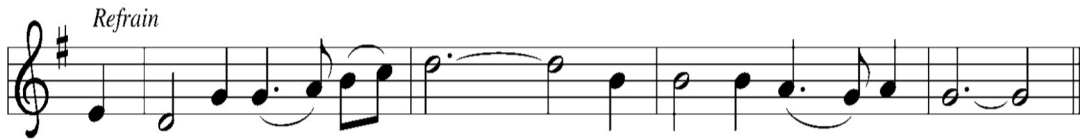
- 1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
- 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
- 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
- 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch-es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

SENDING

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo - *J.S. Bach*

Welcome to Messiah Lutheran Church



Children belong in worship!

Worship kits and a nursery space is available. God rejoices in the joyful noise of children and so do we!



God calls us to welcome everyone!

Messiah seeks to be a welcoming community and to share the love of God with our neighbors. If you are new, please introduce yourself to our pastors.



Worship should be accessible!

Hearing devices (and T-Coil) and large print bulletins are available. We invite you to sit or stand as you are comfortable. All gender and family restroom facilities are available on the first level, please see signs in the Narthex.



All are welcome at Jesus' table!

During communion grape juice and gluten-free options are available. Those not wishing to commune may come forward for a blessing. Those not able to come forward may receive communion in their pew, please notify the usher.



God calls us to pray!

Private prayer requests may be made by writing them on the back of the Welcome Card. If you would like to be added to the prayer list or receive a pastoral care visit, please contact the church office.

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

305 W. Magnetic St., Marquette Michigan
906.225.1119 — www.messiahlutheranmqt.org

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Preacher: | Pr. Andrew Plocher |
| Assisting Minister: | Brenda Blett |
| Reader: | David Echelbarger |
| Ushers: | Anne Rydholm, Cathy Seblonka |
| Communion Assistants: | Dave Blomquist, Mike Coyne, Beth Krznarich, Marina Shinkarenko |
| Greeters: | Sherry Labbe, Penny Streeter |
| Organist: | Jon Banitt |
| Senior Choir Director: | Sara Parks |
| Audio Technician: | Dan Zini |
| Livestream Technician: | Traci Zini |
| Nursery: | Jamie Dodge |
| Flower Delivery: | |
| Refreshments: | |

Acknowledgements:

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messiahlutheranmqt.org/give

If you wish to designate your donation to a specific fund, please be sure to do so. Any undesignated donations automatically go to our general fund which supports the entirety of our ministry.

Thank you for your generosity!

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