

A Place at the Table

PEACE



2nd Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021



Ascension Lutheran Church

1105 N. Washington Blvd.

Ogden, UT 84404

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Welcome to Worship...

Welcome to all God's guests, including those who call themselves "members" of this church named Ascension Lutheran Church more than 50 years ago.

A special welcome to guests who are here for the first time or who call yourselves "visitors" among the people of this community. It is at God's invitation, through worship, the Holy Spirit calls each of us to come to a place of **community, communion** and **commitment**. Each of us brings a different lens to worship, and yet, in a worshiping community, these differences become celebrations of diversity.

**Children are always welcome in worship services;
however please know a nursery is provided for children under 4 years of
age.**

Introduction

Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the LORD of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

We Open the Door—PEACE

Welcome to Worship

P Like the childhood game of “musical chairs,” we are convinced that there are not enough places at the table.

And so we shrink the guest list just in case there is not enough,
and we scramble to occupy the chairs first.

And yet our sacred texts invite us to imagine and make real the gathering of all people to the table, robed in the garments of a Peace that comes with justice.

This is what really matters—this is the fruit of what is right and good.

Cantors

**Peace waits for us as we wait.
Peace waits for us to rest.
Peace waits for our acceptance
of the truth that we are blessed.
In this time of preparation
for the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
of gentleness and play.
Peace is born in us each day!**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

WA Today we offer the Light of Peace to illumine the Door of Welcome.

May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church.

May Peace awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality.

There *IS* room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

Opening Song

All



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our ac - cep - tance of the truth that we are blessed. In this time of



pre - par - a - tion for the work of co - cre - a - tion, for the birth - ing of a world of



gen - tle - ness and play. Peace is born in us each day!

Amanda Udis-Kessler

Sharing the Peace

In our continued physical distancing out of love for the health of one another, we will share the peace of our risen Lord by "speaking" that peace through sign language.

P Christ become Peace with you.

All And also with you.

Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

All Amen.

P Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God for whom we wait,

All in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.
We falter in our call to tend your creation.
We find our sense of self in material wealth.
We fear those different from ourselves.
We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.
Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

P God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!
Through the power of the Holy Spirit, ✝ your sins are forgiven.
You are children of the Most High,
inheritors of the eternal promise,
and recipients of divine mercy.
God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

All Amen.

A Reading from Baruch, the 5th chapter

A poem of hope from the school of the prophet Jeremiah speaks of the return of scattered Israel from Babylon, but also looks beyond that to the time when God's kingdom will be established.

Take off your mourning clothes and oppression, Jerusalem!
Dress yourself in the dignity of God's glory forever.
Wrap the justice that comes from God around yourself like a robe.
Place the eternal one's glory on your head like a crown.
God will show your brilliance everywhere under heaven.
God will give you this name by which to be called forever:
The Peace That Comes from Justice,
The Honor That Comes from Reverence for God!
Get up, Jerusalem!
Stand on the high place, and look around to the east!

See your children gathered from the west to the east
by the holy one's word, as they rejoice that God has remembered them.

Baruch 5: 1-5 (CEB)

L Word of God, Word of Peace.

All Thanks be to God!

A Reading from Philippians, the 1st chapter

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.

I thank my God every time I mention you in my prayers. I'm thankful for all of you every time I pray, and it's always a prayer full of joy. I'm glad because of the way you have been my partners in the ministry of the gospel from the time you first believed it until now. I'm sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ Jesus. I have good reason to think this way about all of you because I keep you in my heart. You are all my partners in God's grace, both during my time in prison and in the defense and support of the gospel. God is my witness that I feel affection for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.

This is my prayer: that your love might become even more and more rich with knowledge and all kinds of insight. I pray this so that you will be able to decide what really matters and so you will be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ. I pray that you will then be filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes from Jesus Christ, in order to give glory and praise to God.

Philippians 1:3-11 (CEB)

L Word of God, Word of Life.

All Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation

Please stand in body or spirit.

♪ ♪ Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel ♪ ♪
God with us revealed in us. His name is called Emmanuel

Gospel Reading

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3rd chapter.

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by “repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

Luke 3:1-6

P The Gospel of our Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

[You may be Seated](#)

Sermon

Pr. Debra Jimenez

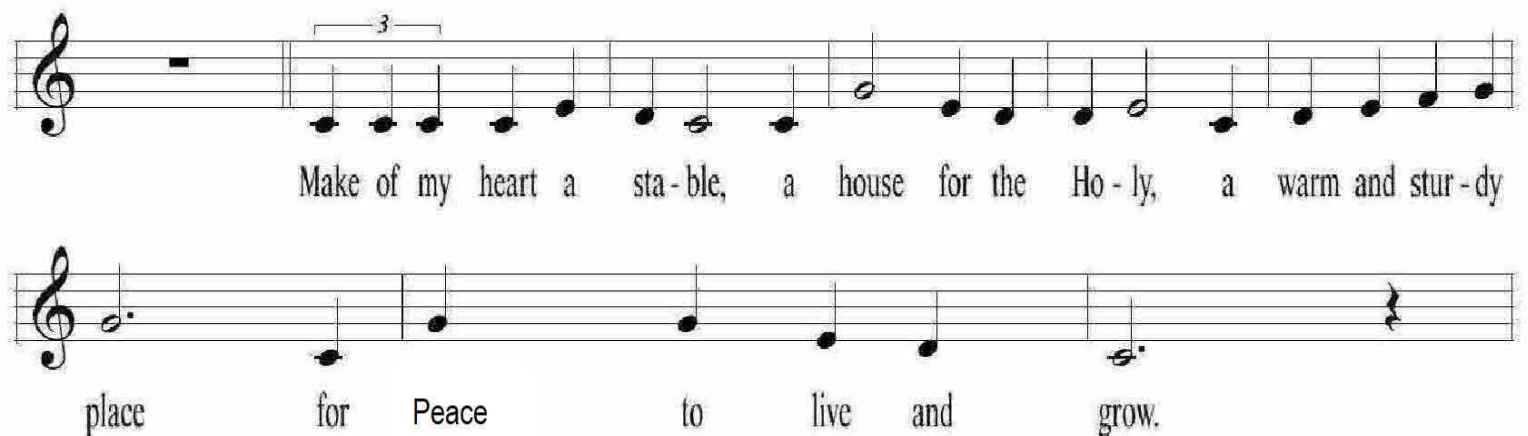
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

- 1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.
- 2 Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king;
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
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Prayers of Intercession

- L In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.



Make of my heart a sta-ble, a house for the Ho-ly, a warm and stur-dy
place for Peace to live and grow.

(each prayer petition ends with)

L: Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

While we still will not physically pass the offering plates we will continue to have the plates available at the entrance to receive your offerings and will lift them up in thanksgiving before the throne of grace.

A Story of Innkeeping

Some scholars have wondered if “The Inn” and its “Keeper” were part of Joseph’s family—after all, he went back to his hometown for the census.

Or perhaps Joseph’s own family did not or could not make room for them and they had to look elsewhere for a place to lay their head.

As many of us know, family can be complicated.

We’ll never know the real circumstances of Joseph’s family relations but the story can help us gain deeper compassion for what we DO know—too many people experience rejection, even from family.

What if we endeavored to BE family to those who need it most, to “house the Holy” in ways we have not yet imagined?

How might WE stir our imaginations and stoke the possibilities for hospitality within our own community?

Offertory Prayer

P God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people.

All Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

P The Holy One be with you

All And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts

All We lift them up to our God.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Birthing God,
creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in our mother's womb, house of the holy,
growing us in your image.

Our hearts and lungs became a place of opening and welcoming,
doors for the Spirit of Life that you breathed into us.

We have not always understood ourselves as sacred creation,
a place for the dwelling of the Holy inside of us.

We have not always seen that in others.

When we turn away from each other and from you,
your love remains steadfast.

You deliver us from the captivity of isolation and fear,
make covenant to be our steadfast, indwelling God,
and continue to speak to us through prophetic utterance,
in the Spirit and through the people.

And so,

with your people on earth

and all the company of heaven

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

O Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly O Ho - ly God of
 pow - er and might, Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Blessed is He
 who comes in Your name Ho - san - na in the hi - est!

P In the midst of a time of despair, oppression, division, and fear,
 your gestation in the house of a holy womb—
 through an unlikely midwife of salvific power—
 brought Jesus, the Christ, into this world.

A common birth for common people,
 he healed the sick, fed the hungry,
 and sat in houses at table with those who suffer,
 and those who perpetuated suffering,
 laying bare complicity and compassion.

In another house, on another night—
 the night in which he gave himself up for us—
 he took bread, gave thanks, broke the bread,
 gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
 Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
 gave thanks, gave it to his disciples, and said:

P “Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for *ALL PEOPLE* for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ’s offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith

***All* Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

P Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Open our hearts in and through this act,
stripping away any excuse or fearful hesitation,
so that we will open our doors to the world
as the body of Christ, redeemed by his love.

Through your Son Jesus Christ
with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and forever.

***All* Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

P Let us approach the throne of grace as we pray as Jesus taught us:

***All* 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.**

The Invitation

P Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

Communion Songs

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling

1 Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me.
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching,
watching for you and for me.

Refrain

"Come home, (Come home,
come home! (come home!)
You who are weary, come home."
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, "O sinner, come home!"

2 Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,
mercies for you and for me? *Refrain*

3 Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised,
promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,
pardon for you and for me. *Refrain*

Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847-1909
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Seek Ye First

Verse 1

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness
And all these things shall be added unto you. Allelu, alleluia!

Verse 2

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by ev'ry word
That proceeds from the mouth of God. Allelu alleluia!

Verse 3

Ask and it shall be given unto you; seek and ye shall find.
Knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Allelu alleluia!

CCLI Song # 1352 - Karen Lafferty

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Post Communion Blessing *and* Prayer

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

All Amen

P Most High God,
you have come among us at this table.

All By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,
through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest. Amen.

Stewardship of Life and Ministry Announcements

Closing Carol

For today's closing carol we sing "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear," a carol written by Edmund Sears and one of the earliest social gospel hymns written. Sears was writing from Boston in the years just before the Civil War began and this hymn emphasizes the message of the angels, "peace on earth, goodwill to all."

**“But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song, which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!”**

Let us remember that in true peace, all can hear the love-song of the angels.
Let us offer our own love-song now.

Benediction

Please stand in body or spirit.

P May God’s Door of Welcome
swing open in your heart and in your life.

May Christ’s humble first dwelling
remind you of the plenty you already know.

And may the Spirit lead you into
more possibility and hospitality than you can imagine,
making room in The Inn for all.

May it be so for you. ✝
May it be so for us.
May it be so for this church.

All Amen

Sending Song

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

- 1 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.
- 4 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.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876
Public Domain

Dismissal

P Go in peace. Christ is near

All Thanks be to God.

Readings for next Sunday,
December 12th
2nd Sunday of Advent

First Reading:

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Psalm:

Isaiah 12: 2-6

Second Reading:

Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel:

Luke 3:7-18

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