

A night sky with a bright starburst in the upper right quadrant. The background is dark blue with a subtle pattern of fine white lines. In the lower half, there is a silhouette of a house with a chimney and a fence, set against a lighter, hazy horizon. The entire image is framed by a blue border.

**A Room with a View**

**LOVE**

**4th Sunday of Advent**

*December 19, 2021*



## Ascension Lutheran Church

1105 N. Washington Blvd.

Ogden, UT 84404

801.782.2810

### 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

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

## A Room with a View—LOVE

### Welcome to Worship

*P* This has been an Advent season of prophets:  
Jeremiah, Baruch, Isaiah, Micah.

And now the prophet is Mary—the woman who was the original house for the holy. She was “the inn,” her womb gestating love for the world.

With all her heart, she proclaims that  
the lowly are lifted, the hungry are fed, mercy reigns.

Like Mary, we must envision, must see, must prophesy and act on that vision for the world that God continues to call us to co-create.

What is the view from the room that God has prepared?

*Cantors*

**Love waits for us as we wait.  
Love waits for us to care.  
Love waits for our compassion  
freely offered, freely shared.  
In this time of preparation  
for the work of co-creation,  
for the birthing of a world  
where faith shapes all we do.  
Love is born in us anew!**

### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

*WA* Today we offer the Light of Love to illumine the Door of Welcome.  
May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church.  
May Love awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality.  
There *IS* room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

## Opening Song

**All**

Love waits for us as we wait. Love waits for us to care. Love waits for  
our com - pas - sion free - ly of - fered free - ly shared. In this time of  
pre - par - a - tion for the work of co - cre - a - tion, for the birth - ing of a world where  
faith shapes all we do. Love ia born in us a - new!

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 Love 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.



**All** 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 Micah, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter

*The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.*

<sup>2</sup>But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;  
<sup>5a</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.

*Micah 5:2-5a*

*L* Word of God, Word of Love.

**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

CCLI Song # 12949 Bob McGee

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## Gospel Reading

*P* The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.

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

*Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.*

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

<sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

<sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
<sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

*Luke 1:39-55*

*P* The Gospel of our Lord.

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

*You may be Seated*

Sermon

Pr. Debra Jimenez

Hymn of the Day

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

***Cantors***

**The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38)**

**An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth,  
to a woman whose name was Mary.**

**The angel said to her,**

**“Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is with you.  
You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus,  
the Chosen One of God Most High.”**

**And Mary said,**

**“I am the servant of my God, I live to do His will.**

***All***

**The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55)**

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you,  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.

Great and mighty are you, O Holy One, strong is your kindness evermore.  
How you favor the weak and lowly one, humbling the proud of heart.

You have cast the mighty down from their thrones,  
and up lifted the humble of heart,  
You have filled the hungry with wondrous things,  
and left the wealthy no part.

Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One,  
strong is your justice strong your love,  
As you promised to Sarah and Abraham, kindness for evermore.

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you,  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.

**Holden Evening Prayer: Annunciation and The Magnificat**

Type: Words and Music; First Line: My soul proclaims your greatness

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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 Love 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**

Imagine living in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth.  
Little town with a big expectation!

As we heard, the prophet Micah, hundreds of years earlier, had predicted that a baby would be born in this "least significant" place, one that would "surely become great."

This was part of the sacred texts of the people and surely something that everyone, including the Innkeeper, in Bethlehem knew about.

#### *But did they believe it?*

Did they believe that something great, a peaceful ruler, would come from their town?

Perhaps not enough to realize the possibilities of a pregnant woman on their doorstep that night.

Do *WE* believe that we are capable of birthing something life-changing for the people in our community?

As the Body of Christ, *could we live with more expectation of what is possible?*

*Could we look more closely at what is right in front of us?*

### **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.

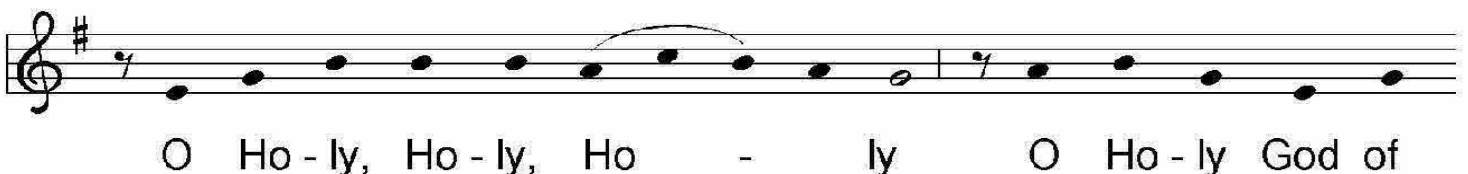
We have not always seen that in others.

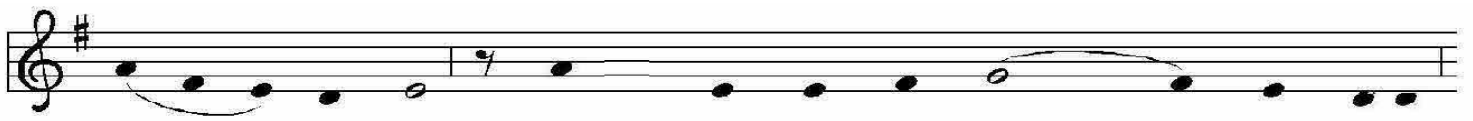
When we turn away from each other and from you,  
your love remains steadfast.

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:

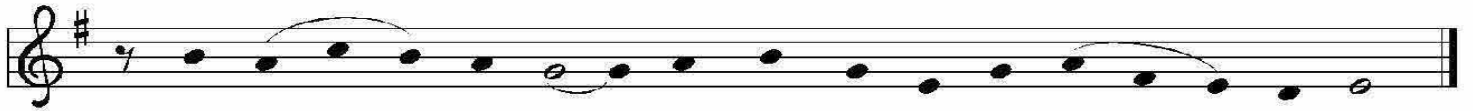




pow - er and might, Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory.



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.

When the Lord Jesus ascended,  
he promised to be with us always,  
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

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:

“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.”

*P* 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.**

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.

*Verse 1*

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name. I've been born again in Jesus' name.  
And in Jesus' name I come to you to share His love as He told me to.

*Chorus*

He said freely, freely you have received. Freely, freely give.  
Go in My name and because you believe others will know that I live.

*Verse 2*

All pow'r is giv'n in Jesus' name, In earth and heav'n in Jesus' name.  
And in Jesus' name I come to you to share His pow'r as He told me to.

*Chorus*

CCLI Song # 13209

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## What Feast of Love

1. What feast of love is offered here, what banquet come from heaven?  
What food of everlasting life, what gracious gift is given?  
This, this is Christ the King, the bread come down from heaven.  
O taste and see and sing! How sweet the manna given!
2. What light of truth is offered here, What covenant from heaven?  
What hope of everlasting life, What wondrous word is given?  
This, this is Christ the King, The Sun come down from heaven.  
O see and hear and sing! The Word of God is given!
3. What wine of love is offered here, What crimson drink from heaven?  
What stream of everlasting life, What precious blood is given?  
This, this is Christ the King, The sweetest wine of heaven.  
O taste and see and sing! The Son of God is given.

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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**

Today's closing carol is "O Come, All Ye Faithful,"  
an 18th century hymn by John Francis Wade.

This carol invites us to come "joyful and triumphant." It moves between  
exhortation and doctrine from the Nicene Creed in the second verse.

But each verse moves from boisterous to almost a hushed tone at the  
beginning of the refrain as we tiptoe into the stable with

"O come, let us adore him."

A little-known verse focuses on love and places us in the manger with Jesus:

**Child, for us sinners  
poor and in the manger,  
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love:  
Who would not love thee,  
loving us so dearly?  
O come, let us adore him...**

Each one of us has known the need to love and be loved, to forgive and be forgiven, to embrace and be embraced. May we approach each person we meet with the adoration of Jesus Christ, tender and merciful, loving and kind, and make this a house of adoration for all.

## 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

### O Come, All Ye Faithful

1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
come and behold him, born the king of angels:

*Refrain*

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

## Dismissal

*P* Go in peace. Christ is near

**All Thanks be to God.**

Readings for next Sunday,  
December 26th  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas

**First Reading:** 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26  
**Psalm:** Psalm 148  
**Second Reading:** Colossians 3:12-17  
**Gospel:** Luke 2:41-52

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