



Complete Worship Folder

December 14, 2025 - 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Julie Bailey, Pastor

Sunday Worship 8:00am & 10:30am

Wednesday Worship 7:00pm

Third Week of Advent

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P: One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

Third Week of Advent

P: Blessed are you, God of might and majesty, for you promise to make the desert rejoice and blossom, to watch over the strangers, and to set the prisoners free. As we light these candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus.

O ransomed people of the Lord, come,

C: let us travel on God's holy way and enter into Zion with singing. Amen.

Light three candles during the song

Hymn: "We Light the Advent Candles" (LS 9, *verses 1-4*)

We light the Advent candles
against the winter night
to welcome our Lord Jesus,
who is the world's true light;
to welcome our Lord Jesus,
who is the world's true light.

Three candles now are gleaming
and show us the true way.
Rejoice, the Baptist cries out:
your Lord has come today!
Rejoice, the Baptist cries out:
your Lord has come today!

Hymn: "Savior of the Nations, Come" (ELW 263 *verses 1-3, 5*)

Savior of the nations, come;
virgin's son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth:
God has chosen such a birth.

Not by human flesh and blood,
but the mystic Breath of God,
was the Word of God made flesh,
fruit of woman, blossom fresh.

Wondrous birth—oh, wondrous child—
from his throne, a virgin mild!
Very God, and Mary's son,
eager now his race to run!

Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.

Greeting

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

C: And also with you.

Kyrie: “Lord Have Mercy” (ELW 155)

Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison. Christe eleison.
Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

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Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray... **Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

(10:30 a.m.) & Dismiss to Children's Church/Christmas Program Practice

First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.]]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,

and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
 and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
 For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
 and streams in the desert;
⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
 and the thirsty ground springs of water;
 the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
 the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
⁸ A highway shall be there,
 and it shall be called the Holy Way;
 the unclean shall not travel on it,
 but it shall be for God's people;
 no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
⁹ No lion shall be there,
 nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
 they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.
¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing;
 everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
 they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Second Reading: James 5:7-10

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation: "Celtic Alleluia" (ELW 174)

Gospel Acclamation

Celtic Alleluia



P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ ¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P: This is the gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day: “Prepare the Royal Highway” (ELW 264)

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:

Refrain Hosanna to the Lord,
 for he fulfills God's word!

God's people, see him coming: your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you! *Refrain*

Then fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him; their voices join your singing: *Refrain*

His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding: *Refrain*

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
 and born of the virgin Mary.**

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.**

The Prayers of the Children of God

Each petition ends...O God for whom we long,

Congregation responds...show us your mercy.

Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Offering

Offering Song: "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" (ELW 247, *verses 1 & 4*)

Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

Come, Hope of unity, make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.

Offering Prayer

A: Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

C: Amen.

Thanksgiving

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray

C: 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 / Distribution of Holy Communion

P: Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

Communion Songs: “We Come to the Hungry Feast” (ELW 479)

We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a word of peace.
To hungry hearts unsatisfied
the love of God is not denied.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a world released
from hungry folk of ev'ry kind,
the poor in body, poor in mind.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast
hungry that the hunger cease,
and knowing, though we eat our fill,
the hunger will stay with us; still
we come, we come to the hungry feast.

“I Received the Living God” (ELW 477)

Refrain I received the living God,
 and my heart is full of joy.
 I received the living God,
 and my heart is full of joy.

Jesus said: I am the bread,
kneaded long to give you life;
you who will partake of me
need not ever fear to die. **Refrain**

Jesus said: I am the way,
and my Father longs for you;
so I come to bring you home
to be one with us anew. **Refrain**

Jesus said: I am the truth;
come and follow close to me.
You will know me in your heart,
and my word shall make you free. **Refrain**

Jesus said: I am the life,
far from whom no thing can grow,
but receive this living bread,
and my Spirit you shall know. **Refrain**

Post-Communion Blessing

P: And now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

A: Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

C: Amen

Blessing

P: May God who comes among us, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

C: Amen.

Sending Song: “Joy to the World” (ELW 267)

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.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

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Dismissal

C: We work together to spread Christ's love with our community, through Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Lives, and an Open Table.

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

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