

Sunday, December 6, 2015

Second Sunday of Advent



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

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Church Secretary: Mary Braun & Mary Kramer

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will LIVE and SERVE through FAITH

we will ACT with LOVE and KINDNESS

we will GIVE hope and SUPPORT to all.

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.

Please notify usher if you would like assistance

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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 prophesy could as easily herald the coming Lord Jesus 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 the Lord and assist all flesh in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #257 ELW

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free, the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy, the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace.

Amen.

Let us come before God in confession.

Silence is kept for reflection

To you, O God,

we lift up our souls. You know us through and through; we confess our sins to you. Remember not our sins; remember us with your steadfast love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Sisters and brothers, come with joy and draw water from the well of salvation.

Remember the gift of baptism: your sin is washed away in the name of † Jesus; you belong to Christ; you are anointed to serve. Stand up and raise your heads!

The reign of God is near.

Amen

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM: “Emmanuel”

Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

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.

³I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God’s grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Psalm: Luke 1:68-79

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us. (Lk. 1:78)

⁶⁸Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel, you have come to your people and set them free.

⁶⁹**You have raised up for us a mighty Savior, born of the house of your servant David. R**

⁷⁰Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us from our enemies, ⁷¹from the hands of all who hate us,

⁷²**to show mercy to our forebears, and to remember your holy covenant.**

⁷³This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham: ⁷⁴to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

free to worship you without fear, ⁷⁵holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life. R *(In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us.)*

⁷⁶And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

⁷⁷**to give God’s people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.**

⁷⁸In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

⁷⁹**to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. R** *(In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us.)*

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

John the Baptist is a herald of the saving Lord, 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.’ □”

SERMON HYMN “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

#254 ELW

SERMON: “A Voice Calls in the Wilderness”

OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Emmanuel has come, is here, and is coming soon. Let us join in prayer for the church, the earth, and those who are in need, that all receive what God promises to give.

A brief silence.

O God, our hope of unity, come to your church around the world. Purify your people and give to all the wisdom and courage to proclaim your word of forgiveness and renewal.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

O God our Savior, come to the earth that you made. Nurture the health of lands and seas. Give to plants and animals favorable weather. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

O God of peace, come to all the nations. Inspire heads of state and regional leaders with a passion for justice. Bring peace throughout the world. We pray especially for (*here places or situations in need of peace may be named*). Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

O God of love, come to everyone in need. Heal the sick. Answer the cries of those who are poor, those without housing, and those who have fled from violence or famine. We pray especially for Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

O God of compassion, come to our congregation and our community. This Advent, help us to prepare for your coming. Make us gifts to one another, that no one remains destitute or despairing. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

O Lord of hosts, we praise you for the lives of all the faithful (*especially Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, and . . .*). Bring us with them to your feast of eternal compassion. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers, merciful God, and make us ready to receive you when you come through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

APOSTLE'S CREED

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 into hell. 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy One, we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, harvesters of justice and righteousness, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

BLESSING

May God direct your ways in peace, make you abound in love for one another and for all, and strengthen your hearts until the coming of our Lord Jesus. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN:

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

#264 ELW

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ATTENDANCE REGISTRY Please sign and pass the new attendance registry folders which you will find in the pew.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH Don't forget Handel's Messiah will be sung tonight at the Aitkin High School Auditorium 7:00 PM.

CHRISTMAS PARTY There is a signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall for the Annual Christmas Party. When: Monday, December 7th at 5:30pm. Location: MSA. Enjoy and evening of fellowship and a short program by Val. See signup sheet for more details.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD We at Bethesda will be participating in the collection scarves, socks, etc. Please place them on the tree in the narthex. The gifts will be distributed on December 14th.

WANTED for next year's bazaar – any deer antlers and grouse tail feathers. Please call Char Berg at 320-684-2102.

DIRECTORY Please stop by the Fellowship Hall and pick up your new church directory. If information is incorrect, please write the changes on a piece of paper and put in the basket on the secretary's desk in the office. We will put any new updates in the monthly newsletter so you can correct your copies.

CHRISTMAS CARING & SHARING project will use part of our local benevolence dollars from the veggie stand and designated donations to give gas and food cards to needy families. If you know someone who needs help this Christmas please complete the forms and place in box in the entry by December 13.

POINSETTIAS Sign-up for Poinsettias plants in the Fellowship Hall. We will have the signup sheet there on Nov. 29th, Dec. 6 and 13th. Please help beautify our church for Christmas. The plants are \$15.00 each. Buy one in memory/honor of a loved one.

MISSION & EVANGELISM is EVERYONE'S JOB! You can help mission giving by taking an attractive calendar or planner and leaving a Cash Food Shelf Donation. AND/OR.....You can help spread the word and invite someone to join us here at Bethesda by taking another calendar with a list of Bethesda Services and events to a neighbor or friend. Calendars and Planners are available in Fellowship Hall or entry way. Thank you for your support.

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL There is a Christmas giving display in the Fellowship Hall for Heifer International. Pick up information and free pencil and/or check out the website on the bookmark: <http://www.heifer.org/>