

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dec 09, 16 – Advent Midweek Services (7:00 P.M.)

Dec 24 – Christmas Eve Family (7:00 P.M); Christmas Midnight Communion (11:30 P.M.)

INVOCATION

P: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: Prepare the way of the Lord. Recalling our Baptism into Christ, we confess our sins to God in the full assurance of the gift of forgiveness by the mighty sacrifice of His Son.

C: O God, from the wilderness of lives disfigured and crushed by the devil, our own sin, and the sins of others, we cry out to You for the forgiveness of our sins, those that trouble us as well as those of which we are not aware. Restore our life and faith by Your own command for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**P: With the birth of Jesus in full view, and the plan of salvation set in motion, God spoke to Isaiah saying, “Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her
that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned...”**

This word of forgiveness declared to the people of Israel centuries before the arrival of the Son of God, is still true today for those in our time, who see the coming of Jesus as the fulfillment of prophecy. Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you. And in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

P: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

C: the light no darkness can overcome.

P: Let Your light scatter the darkness

C: and illumine Your Church.

HYMN “We Light the Advent Candle” (vss. 1–2)

**We light the Advent candle And wait for Christ to come.
With hope, we trust the promise That He will bring us home.
Our hope is in our Savior Who wins for us God’s favor.
We wait with growing light Till God makes all things right!**

We light the Advent candle And thank the Lord for rest.
With peace, we know our Jesus Has come to be our guest.
This peace beyond all knowing Within our hearts is glowing.
We wait with growing light Till God makes all things right!

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 40:1–11* (Comfort for God's people)

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her
that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"
Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

VERSE *Luke 3:4b, 6*

**L: Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight;
C: all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia.**

HOLY GOSPEL *Mark 1:1–8* (John the Baptist prepares the way.)

**P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the first chapter.
C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

**“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way,
the voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”**

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” P: This is the Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN No. 344 “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” [

**On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**Then cleansed be ev’ry life from sin;
Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.**

**We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away
Like flow’rs that wither and decay.**

**Lay on the sick Thy healing hand
And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face
Till beauty springs in ev’ry place.**

**All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore,
And Holy Spirit, evermore.**

SERMON “An Extraordinary Introduction” Mark 1:1-8 Pastor Vern

CONFESSION OF FAITH THE NICENE CREED *Please stand*

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

And he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH Special Requests...

Chris Baker (Diana (& Keith) Szolga's Son) - for protection during his deployment to the Middle East.

Wayne and Gwen Kemp (ongoing cancer treatments); June Shaver (Linda William's sister) recently diagnosed with cancer; Jeanine Stake (deep health concerns), Cathy Schweizer (Polly Ziegler's sister) liver failure and Covid; Nancy Schmidt (broken foot).

Kuppler family (Curtis' Uncle, Ed Zobler, died on Monday). Betty Munson (Marcia Kempton's mother, passed away on Wednesday)

Birthdays: Sloan Colvin, Dennis Brockmeyer, Todd Gorney, Brooks Colvin,
Anniversaries: Bob & Charla Morton; Elmer & Susan McKean

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

You sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for our Savior, by whose sacrifice of His blood and death on a cross all who are baptized in Him are enabled by His Spirit worthily to repent and receive forgiveness of sins and life everlasting.

Grant that we may faithfully eat of His body and drink of His blood and so proclaim His death until He comes again in glory.

C: Amen.

SANCTUS (Holy, Holy, Holy) LSB 195

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He
Who comes in the name of the Lord
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

SELF-REFLECTION (In preparation of receiving the Sacrament, let us take this moment of silence for self-reflection)

1. Are you baptized in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
2. Do you know you are a sinner in need of God's grace?
3. Do you believe Jesus died to atone for your sins?
4. Do I believe that God offers His forgiveness through the "real" presence of Jesus, in, with, and under the elements of bread and wine?
5. Do you seek to amend your sinful life?

If you have answered "Yes" to all of these questions you are encouraged to come. Jesus said, "Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

P: Let us now approach the table of the Lord with sincere hearts, joyfully receiving His promised presence, in, with and under the elements of bread and wine.

P: Merciful Lord,

C: we do not presume to come to this Your table, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Your manifold and great mercies.

We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Your table.

But You are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed, through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (*Matthew 6:9-13*)

P: Remember us in Your kingdom, Lord, and teach us to pray:

**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 PEACE OF THE LORD

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

WORDS OF OUR LORD

P: With the very words of Christ we consecrate and partake of this sacred meal.

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

(Let us eat together the body of Christ.)

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

(Let us drink together from the cup of salvation, the blood of Christ shed for our sins.)

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" (LSB 940 - vs. 1)

**Holy God We praise Thy name
Lord of all, we bow before Thee.
All on earth Thy scepter claim,
All in heav'n above adore Thee.
Infinite Thy vast domain
Everlasting is Thy reign.**

BLESSING OF THE LORD *Numbers 6:24–26*

P: The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

HYMN No. 348 “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns” (vss. 1, 4, & 5)

The King shall come when morning dawns And light triumphant breaks,
When beauty gilds the eastern hills And life to joy awakes.

Oh, brighter than that glorious morn Shall dawn upon our race
The day when Christ in splendor comes And we shall see his face.

The King shall come when morning dawns And light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray: Come quickly, King of kings.

SENDING

P: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.