

# Blessed Savior Lutheran Church

1205 North Lincoln Ave. O'Fallon, IL 62269  
(618) 632-0126  
www.mybslc.org  
Worship – 9:30 am.

Rev. Vernon Lintvedt, Pastor  
Cheryl Vohlken, Organist  
No Sunday School & Bible Class today

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 24, 2023**

## WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

**TODAY** – Christmas Eve Family Service (7 pm)

- Christmas Eve/Day Midnight Communion & Candlelight Service (11:30 pm)

**Dec 31** – New Year's Eve Worship (9:30 am)

Pastor Vern's Retirement Reception & Dinner provided by Chef Noah Geis  
at the KC Hall (11am – 3 pm) - **402 E. US Hwy 50, O'Fallon, IL**

## INVOCATION

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

C: **Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: Everlasting Father, we acknowledge our unworthiness to stand in Your presence as we celebrate the arrival of Your Son to save us. Confessing our sins of thought, word, and deed, we pray:

C: **Father, forgive us.**

P: The Virgin Mary accepted Your call to be the mother of Jesus. Forgive us for the ways we ignore the call of Your Holy Word and live in disobedience to Your perfect will. We pray:

C: **Father, forgive us.**

P: Your Son, our Savior, was humbly born and laid in the Bethlehem manger. Forgive our greed, pride, and rejection of Your commands. We pray:

C: **Father, forgive us.**

P: The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord had made known to them. Forgive our self-interest and unwillingness to leave everything to follow You. We pray:

C: **Father, forgive us.**

P: The Magi followed the star as it led them to Jesus, the true King of all people. Forgive us for not seeking You with all our hearts. We pray:

C: **Father, forgive us.**

P: This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you,

C: **that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.**

P: If we walk in the light, as He is in the light,

C: **we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.** (Moment of silence before receiving Absolution)

P: Our Wonderful Counselor and Mighty God sends forth His perfect gift into our sinful world. Today we behold the glory of Jesus Christ and receive the redemption He earned for us by His death and resurrection. By faith in His promises, we become children of our Everlasting Father and heirs of His eternal kingdom. As your pastor, and by the command and authority of Jesus, our Prince of Peace, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

## HYMN No. 380 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" (Vss. 1 & 3)

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The Herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings.  
Mild he lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! The Herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

**INTROIT** *Psalm 93:1-2, 5; antiphon: Isaiah 9:2*

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
C: **those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.**

P: The LORD reigns; He is robed in majesty;  
C: **the LORD is robed; He has put on strength as His belt.**

P: Yes, the world is established;  
C: **it shall never be moved.**

P: Your throne is established from of old;  
C: **You are from everlasting.**

P: Your decrees are very trustworthy;  
C: **holiness befits Your house, O LORD, forevermore.**

**ALL (Sung): With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The Herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
C: **those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.**

**SALUTATION**

P: The Lord be with you.  
C: **And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray.  
O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
C: **Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you."

But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"' Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house... And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.'"

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE**    *Romans 16:25-27*

L: The Epistle of St Paul to the Romans, the sixteenth chapter.

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE**    *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

L: To us a child is born,

**C: to us a son is given;**

L: and the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name shall be called

**C: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

L: Sing to the Lord a new song,

**C: for He has done marvelous things!**

**HOLY GOSPEL**    *Luke 1:26-28*

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

**C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.    **C: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN No. 374**    "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"

**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger:  
There He lay, the Undefined, To the world a stranger.  
Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race Who have found his favor.**

**Angels sang about his birth, Wise Men sought and found him;  
Heaven's star shone brightly forth Glory all around him.  
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing;  
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ringing.**

**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;  
He is still the Undefined But no more a stranger.  
Son of God of humble birth, Beautiful the story;**

**Praise his name in all the earth; Hail the King of glory!**

**SERMON**    "The Diamond Found in the Manger"    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

- P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.
- P: Wonderful Counselor, You govern all things with wisdom, righteousness, and truth. Grant to all mankind the joy of Your presence, that we may see You at work in our midst. Guide all nations to behold Your glory in the face of Jesus. Wherever the good news of great joy is announced, grant that lives be changed forever by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Let us pray to the Lord:
- C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our world!**
- P: Mighty God, You reign over all things and yet, in Christ, You reach down to save us by placing the most brilliant Light and most beautiful diamond in the manger of Bethlehem. Give us the boldness to declare Your mighty deeds and reflect the brightness of Your truth throughout the world. Inspire us to fulfill our earthly callings so that, through our worship and witness, all may know Your saving love. Let us pray to the Lord:
- C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our hearts and minds!**
- P: Everlasting Father, You embrace us and make us Your children through faith in Your only-begotten Son. Bless all those who, in any form of illness of mind and body, need Your tender care. Heal the sick, bind up the brokenhearted, and grant Your perfect peace to all who rest in You. We pray for those with special needs, [*especially* the Colvin's friend **John Avampato, our precious Hannah Williams having gone through a 2<sup>nd</sup> surgery, our faithful brother in Christ Bob Strohm recovering from hospitalization, others . . .**], that they may rejoice in the message of Christ coming into this world for them. Let us pray to the Lord:
- C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our bodies and souls!**
- P: Eternal Lord, pour out Your blessings upon **Joseph Monaco, Don Drouin, Marc Ellington, Marcie Monaco, Mark Morton, Bill Feldmann, and Audrey Lesire**, as we celebrate the years of life You have given them. Our hearts swell that You have given them the life that leads us from death to resurrection and the unending fullness of joy in our second birth. Make us all mindful that every gift of this life and of the next is from Your hand. Let us pray to the Lord.
- C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our celebrations!**
- P: Prince of Peace, You give to us what the world can never give. Drive out all fears and doubts. Deliver us from all enemies, seen and unseen. Grant us solace in Him whose blood has set us free that we may be Your people forever. Open our ears to the message of the angels: "Fear not . . . for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Let us pray to the Lord:
- C: Lord Jesus, bring joy to our world!**
- P: Gracious God, we entrust all of these prayers into Your good and gracious hands, for the sake of Him whose birth we celebrate: Your beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, in whose name we pray.
- C: Amen.**

## ✠ 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, Mighty God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

You sent our Lord Jesus Christ, come to us wrapped in swaddling cloths, the diamond found in Bethlehem's manger. He grew up to live the perfect life we cannot live so that, by His sacrificial death and resurrection, we are saved from sin, delivered from death, and promised peace forever in Your eternal kingdom.

All glory and honor are Yours, O Lord, and we are blessed to receive You as You come to us in this most sacred Meal You have prepared for all who trust in You.

Hear us as we pray in Your name and in the words You have taught us:

**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.**

### THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

#### PEACE OF THE LORD (PAX DOMINI)

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

**C: And also with you.**

#### AGNUS DEI "Of the Father's Love Begotten" (vss. 1 & 3)

**Of the Father's love begotten  
Ere the worlds began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega,  
He the source, the ending He,  
Of the things that are, that have been,  
And that future years shall see  
Evermore and evermore.**

**This is he whom seers in old time  
Chanted of with one accord,  
Whom the voices of the prophets  
Promised in their faithful word;  
Now He shines, the long expected;  
Let creation praise its Lord  
Evermore and evermore.**

#### DISTRIBUTION

"God with Us" Terrian Woods (video)  
LSB 375 "Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising"  
LSB 821 "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus"

"

## POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

P: Let us pray.

You have come to us, O Prince of Peace, in the precious gift of Your body and blood. Grant that we who know the treasure of Christmas may extend to others the grace and peace we have here received; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

## CLOSING SENTENCES

*Isaiah 9:6*

P: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;

C: **and the government shall be upon His shoulder,**

P: and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,

C: **Mighty God,**

P: Everlasting Father,

C: **Prince of Peace.**

## BLESSING OF THE LORD (BENEDICTION) *Numbers 6:24–26*

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord smile upon you and give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

## HYMN No. 338 "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

**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.**

**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.**

## SENDING

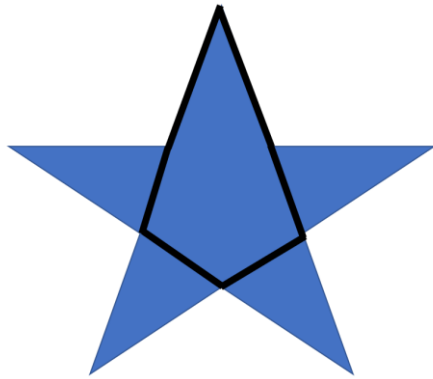
P: Go in peace to love and serve the precious Babe of Bethlehem,

C: **Thanks be to God.**



*Fourth Sunday  
of Advent*

*PEACE CAME TO EARTH*



**THE 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
(CHRISTMAS EVE)**

December 24, 2023  
9:30 A.M.

***“THE DIAMOND FOUND IN THE MANGER”***