



Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church – ELCA

“Encouraging faith and proclaiming God’s love by Gathering, Growing and Giving.”

2nd Sunday of Advent

Service of the Word

December 10th, 2023

This worship is being live streamed. Your presence in the sanctuary signifies your agreeing to be on our live broadcast.

NOTE: Bold text indicates worshippers’ response, and * means please stand as able.

PRELUDE

Michelle Young

WELCOME & MINISTRY MESSAGES

Pastor Ron Gerl

Reader: *Sarah Larson*

Acolyte: *Cade Larson*

Video: *Dave Young*

Ushers: *Keith & Rita Lee, Tim Jenson*

Serving fellowship today: Rita & Keith Lee, Nate Lee

GATHERING

* GREETING 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.**

* GATHERING HYMN On Jordan’s Banks the Baptist’s Cry LBW#36- first 4 verses

On Jordan’s Banks the Baptist’s Cry

On Jordan’s banks 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 you as our Savior, Lord, our refuge
and our great reward; without your grace we
waste away like flow’rs that wither and decay.

Stretch forth your hand, our health restore, and make us
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up
on us shine and fill the world with love divine.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. Composite

Public Domain

* CONFESSIO Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God, **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.**

* FORGIVENESS God clothes us with garments of salvation and covers us with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY Stir up our hearts, **O Lord, to prepare the way for your only son. By this coming give us strength in our conflicts and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever**

Amen

ADVENT WREATH READING/ LIGHTING

Second Sunday of Advent: PEACE

Matthew 3:1-3:

In those days, John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is near!" Yes, this is he of whom this was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: A voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight."

Lighting of Candle 1 & 2 (*singing O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*) LBW#34 verses 1&2

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O Come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

Text: Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" was reprinted with
Permission under One License #A-724679. All rights reserved.

Advent Wreath Prayer Week 2 — Peace

Heavenly Father, You are the God who gives peace. This second week of Advent causes us to remember that because of Jesus we can experience a Christmas free from turmoil and chaos. Regardless of our circumstances or our situations, you offer us peace that passes understanding. That first Christmas, when you sent your Son, you sent the one who is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Even the angels cried out, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." The angels knew your purpose. They know the gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love that Christmas held. They recognized that the fullness of God was wrapped in the tiny flesh of an infant as you humbled yourself and dwelt among us. Emmanuel. God with us as the baby Jesus.

Father, this second week of Advent, keep us in perfect peace as our mind stays on the truth of your powerful love. Thank you for your mighty, sovereign hand. Help us to trust fully in you and rest in the peace that you offer. It's in the precious name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

GROWING

Our first reading today is from the 40th chapter of Isaiah.

Isaiah 40:1-11 NIV

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

¹ Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶ A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. ⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." ⁹ You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah "Here is your God!" ¹⁰ See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. ¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

Here ends the first reading.

C: Thanks be to God.

Please join in reading Psalm 85 responsively.

Psalm: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 NIV

¹ You, LORD, showed favor to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

² **You forgave the iniquity of your people and covered all their sins.**

⁸ I will listen to what God the LORD says; he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants— but let them not turn to folly.

⁹ **Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰ Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

¹¹ **Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven.**

¹² The LORD will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest.

¹³ **Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps.**

Our second reading is from 2nd Peter 3rd chapter.

2 Peter 3:8-15a NIV

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare ¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

Here ends the second reading.

C: Thanks be to God.

*Please stand as you are able.

The Holy Gospel according to Mark 1st chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord. Gospel:

Mark 1:1-8 NIV

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

¹ The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" ³ "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord make straight paths for him.'" ⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to

him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O, Christ.

MESSAGE "**Pointing the Way!**"

Pastor Ron Gerl

* HYMN OF THE DAY O God, Our Help in Ages Past LBW#320- first 4 verses

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,
from everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt.

Public Domain

*THE APOSTLES' CREED (professed together)

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**

*Or, He descended to the dead. ** universal

* PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Reenergize your faithful people to live with hope and compassion, especially those who serve as missionaries near and far. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief (especially). Deliver all in any need. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.** Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.** You have sent out your angels and gathered your faithful people from every time and place, calling them into one fellowship of saints. Bless the witness of those who dwell in your eternal. **Merciful God, receive our prayer.**

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

Amen.

The OFFERING PLATE is located at the entrance of the church sanctuary. Your generous giving supports God's ministry at Shepherd of the Hill.

*OFFERING HYMN We are an Offering ELW#692

We are an Offering

We lift our voices we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord use our voices, Lord use our hands, Lord use our lives, they are yours: we are an offering. All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you. We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: We are an offering, we are an offering.

Text: Dwight Liles, b. 1957

"We are an Offering" was reprinted with
Permission under One License #A-724679 and
CCUJ.#1727740. All rights reserved.

* OFFERING PRAYER God our provider, **by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

* LORD'S PRAYER **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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

* BENEDICTION

* ANNOUNCEMENTS

* BLESSING The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ☩ remain upon you now and forever.
Amen.

* SENDING HYMN Comfort, Comfort Now My People *LBW#29- all verses*

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

“Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!” So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow’s load.
To God’s people now proclaim that God’s pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over; God will reign in peace forever.

For the herald’s voice is crying in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance, since the kingdom now is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way!
Let the valleys rise to meet him, and the hills bow down to greet him!

Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain!
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits his holy reign!
For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token that God’s word is never broken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1611-1684; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878, alt.

Public Domain

* DISMISSAL Go in peace and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

* BELLS/POSTLUDE

Michelle Young

^^

THIS WEEK AT CHURCH AND BEYOND OUR DOORS

TODAY: 12/10 8:45 am - Sunday School
8:45 am - Adult Bible Study
10 am - 2nd Sunday in Advent worship service
- Fellowship after worship

MONDAY: 12/11 9:30-11 am - Secretary in Office
7 pm - AA Meeting

TUESDAY: 12/12 4-6 pm - Food Pantry
5:30 pm - Finance Meeting

WEDNESDAY: 12/13 3:20 pm - Confirmation

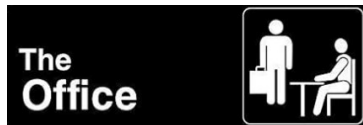
FRIDAY: 12/15 10-Noon - Food Pantry
12:15 pm-till done - *potato prep for Lefse making!*

SATURDAY: 12/16 9 am-till done - Lefse Making!! *No experience needed ☺*

SUNDAY: 12/17 8:45 am - Sunday School
- NO Adult Bible Study
10 am - **SOTH Christmas Program**, 3rd Sunday in Advent
- **Church wide Lefse & Bake sale after program!**
~ *Proceeds benefit the WELCA and the many projects they help the church with!*

Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church 207 University St, Elk Mound, WI 54739
Pastor Ron Gerl: revgerl@hotmail.com Office Phone: 715-879-5115 Email: sothlc@sothem.org
Website www.sothem.org On Facebook Custodian: Terry Stamm 715-379-3728
Secretary: Kris Jenson krisjens4@hotmail.com 715-563-1402
Sunday school Coordinators: Jaime Folczyk mjfolczyk@yahoo.com and Holly Sweeney
hollysweeney65@gmail.com Giving questions contact: Barb Vadnais barbvadnais1@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Effective 10/16 Secretary will be in office Mondays 9:30-11:30 am or occasional Wednesday 6-8 pm depending on her schedule.



Christmas for Kids~

SOTH is sponsoring two families this year. If you signed up to sponsor any children, your wrapped and labeled gifts must be dropped off to church by Sunday 12/18.

Sign-up sheets for this outreach program are on the *Welcome* table. Please place wrapped & labeled gifts in the boxes under the *Welcome* table.

MAILING ADDRESSES for those folks who you may want to send words of care, concern, cheer or sympathy. **Please let the secretary know if you would like to be added and/ or know someone who might like to be.**

- Audrey Bracher:
Meadowbrook at Bloomer 1840 Priddy St, Room 112 B, Bloomer, WI 54724

SIGN UP TO HOST A SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP~

Serve with family or friends **or** pair up with a “veteran” fellowship server- we love to help!

Entails: Making/serving coffee, cut/serve summer sausage and cheese, and crackers (found in the church refrigerator/ cabinets), and bring one treat (fruit or sweets or popcorn...you choose). Then just clean up after the event.

Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SA5028313. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission. One License Podcast / Streaming License A-724679/ CCLI Streaming License #1727740

Do you know the Meaning of the Christmas Tree? Join us next Sunday, December 17th as our Sunday School and Confirmation classes present the 2023 Christmas program.





Habitat for Humanity "Faith Build"

Shepherd of the Hill, as a partner in the Menomonie Area Mission Coalition, is being invited to join Chippewa Valley Habitat for Humanity in a "Faith Build" to help local families in need of safe, affordable housing.

Chippewa Valley Habitat for Humanity is a Christian ministry based in Eau Claire with a "mission to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope."

Three twin-home builds are being planned for the Brickyard Road area in Menomonie and one is already in the process of being constructed!

Here are some ways we can get involved:

- Volunteer as an individual at the worksite (Activities may include framing, flooring, painting, trimming, siding, dry wall, landscaping, plumbing, electrical work, etc.)
- Organize volunteers within our faith community.
- Provide lunch for on-site volunteers.
- Make a financial contribution and/or lead a fund-raising group.
- Share updates on social media and with friends.
- Create a welcome basket or other special items for the family. Sign up to volunteer by creating an account (background check required) at: cvh4h.volunteerhub.com

**** Ground Blessing Ceremony**

The ground blessing ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, December 10 at 1:00p.m. (Evening game for the Packers!) The city Mayor, the families, the faith community, neighbors, CVH4H Board Members and others are invited to join. Please register for the event through this [link](#). Or, go to cvh4h.volunteerhub.com and search for the event on December 10, 2023. The address and event details are noted on the event registration page.

***** Volunteer Days*****

There are two volunteer build day opportunities listed on cvh4h.volunteerhub.com Saturday, December 9th and Saturday, December 16th.