

Fourth Sunday of Advent

12/22/2024

Greg Fetzner, Pastor

J.V. Trautwein, Pastor Emeritus

P In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen**

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen**

GATHERING HYMN: [ELW#251 "My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness"](#)

The first and second candles of the Advent Wreath are lit as the following prayer is offered.

P Let us pray. We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, open our eyes to see your presence in the lowly ones of this earth. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us in the Word made flesh. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

C Amen

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the refining fire of the Holy Spirit, and the peace of God, which surpasses understanding, be with you all.

C And also with you.



A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



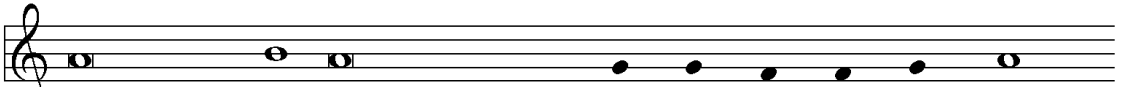
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord. **G** A - men

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. 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.

C **Amen**

Please be seated.

PSALM 80:1-7

L ¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

C ²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.**

L ³Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

C ⁴**O Lord God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

L ⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

C ⁶**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,**

and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

L ⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;

C **let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

LUKE 1:39-55

L **A reading from the Gospel according to Luke:**

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."^[b] ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"^[c] ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born^[d] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother

of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be ^[e] a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

Mary’s Song of Praise

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name;

⁵⁰ indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones

and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things

and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HYMN OF THE DAY: [ELW#265 “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”](#)

SERMON: [\(Sermon Audio Link\)](#)

Pastor Greg's Context-O-Meter for the Gospel of Luke

**WE ARE
HERE**

The Prologue	1:1–4
The Infancy Narratives	1:5–2:52
Preparation for the Ministry of Jesus	3:1–4:15
The Ministry of Jesus in Galilee	4:16–9:50
The Journey to Jerusalem	9:51–19:27
The Ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem	19:28–21:38
The Suffering and Death of Jesus	22:1–23:56
The Resurrection of Jesus	24:1–53

Please stand, as you are able.

- P** Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.
- C** **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

OFFERING*: ([On-Line giving Link](#))

The Offering is received and is presented at the altar.

RESPONSE: "Create in Me"

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -
it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store to me the
joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major and 3/4 time. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

- L** As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A brief silence.

- L** God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy,
C receive our prayer.
- L** God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy,
C receive our prayer.

L God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy,
C receive our prayer.

L God our beacon, as we begin the slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill. We pray for Heidi Brackbill, Rebecca Brennan, Michelle Drayson, the Elshafei family, Jeff Fultz, Lydia Hendersen, Mark Hughes, Kaitlyn Leedy, Charlotte Leer, Wendy Neumann, Rick Newman, Peter Olsen, Dottie Reitz, Claudia Schober, D. J. Singer, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family, Esther Trautwein, and Pastor Jack. Lord, in your mercy,
C receive our prayer.

L God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy,
C receive our prayer.

L Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.
C Amen

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**

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.
C Amen

SENDING HYMN: [ELW#272 “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”](#)

P Go in peace. Love and serve God and neighbor.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*Offering to be sent to
Robert Brackbill
10274 Raleigh Tavern Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church
9122 Sybert Drive
Columbia Hills
Ellicott City, MD 21043
<https://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org>

Please note that you now have the opportunity of online giving with the link found after the offering designation or here: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/2627291

ANNOUNCEMENTS and Upcoming Events

- Sundays – 1:00pm – 4:00pm – Fontanini Nativity Village is open
- Sunday, Dec 22, 2024 – 6 pm, Chocolate and Carols – Firepit Experience
- Tuesday, Dec 24, 2024 - 7:00pm - Christmas Eve Service
- Saturday, Jan 11, 2025 – 10:00am – Taking down the greens
- Saturday, Jan 18, 2025 – 7:00pm – Game Night
- Sunday, Feb 2, 2025 – 1:00pm – Lady Terps Basketball

Upcoming Worship

Date	Liturgical Day	Preaching Texts	Worship Leader
December 22	4 Advent	Luke 1:26-56	Monica
December 24	Christmas Eve	Luke 2:1-20	Pastor Greg
December 29	1 Christmas	Luke 2:21-40	Pastor Greg

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