

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH



DECEMBER 21, 2023

7:00 PM

REV. ANALYSE TRIOLO, PASTOR + VICAR CHRISTIAN CEDERSTROM
HOLY TRINITY: 246-55 87TH AVENUE, BELLEROSE, NY 11426
CHRIST LUTHERAN: 57 SPOONER STREET, FLORAL PARK, NY 11001

✙ = Please stand as you are able.

INSTRUMENTAL PRELUDE

WELCOME

Welcome. Tonight is the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. As we gather together in worship, we hope that this will be a time where we can, in community with God and one another, acknowledge that the emotions around the Advent and Christmas season are more complex than the joy and cheer that constantly surround us; that we can affirm that emotions of pain and loss, regardless of the source, are real and are often felt with particular intensity at this time of year. We pray that you are able to find a place here to feel those emotions in a safe and welcoming space.

✙ **GATHERING**

Leader: Remember the messengers of faith you have known, rejoice, and give thanks for their witness.

People: We, too, will prepare the way of Christ; we will help to level the hills and valleys of life.

Leader: Hold one another in your hearts this day; pray that love may rule all your relationships.

People: We will weep with those who weep. We will rejoice with those who rejoice.

Leader: God will be with you wherever you go.

People: Amen.

✙ **GATHERING HYMN**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

ELW #257 + Verse 1, 2, & 6

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

2 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

Refrain

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Refrain

✝ PRAYER FOR THE LONGEST NIGHT

God of love and understanding, we gather here this evening to confront our pain in the midst of the world's celebration. Help us know that you are present with us in all of our moods and feelings and seasons. Grant us a taste of the hope, peace, joy, and love that you promise to all of your people through the gift of your son Jesus.

Amen.

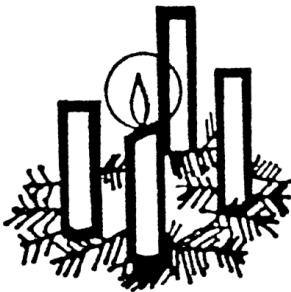
~Please be seated.~

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We light four candles tonight in honor of our loved ones. We light one for our grief, one for our courage, one for our memories, and one for our love.

THE FIRST CANDLE

First Reading: Lamentations 3:54b-57



Leader: The first candle represents our **grief**. We own the pain of losing loved ones, of dreams that go unfulfilled, of hopes that evaporate in despair.

All: May God's eternal love surround them.

Sung Response

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

*Wait for the Lord
ELW #262*

THE SECOND CANDLE

Second Reading: Psalm 121

Leader: I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from where is my help to come?

All: ***My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.***

Leader: He will not let your foot be moved and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

All: ***Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.***

Leader: The Lord himself watches over you; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

All: ***So that the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.***

Leader: The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; it is he who shall keep you safe.

All: ***The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth for ever more.***

This candle represents our **courage**. It symbolizes the courage to confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, to share our feelings honestly and openly with each other, and to dare to hope in the midst of pain.

All: Refresh, restore, renew us, O God,
And lead us into your future.



Sung Response

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

*Wait for the Lord
ELW #262*

THE THIRD CANDLE

Third Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5; 26-31



This candle represents our **memories**. For the times we laughed together, cried together, were angry with each other or overjoyed with each other. We light this candle for the memories of caring and joy we shared together.

All: Let us remember that our loved ones are always with us when we share their stories.

Sung Response

*Wait for the Lord
ELW #262*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

THE FOURTH CANDLE

✝ Fourth Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

This candle represents our **love**. The love we have given, and the love we have received. The love that has gone unacknowledged and unfelt, and the love that has been shared in times of joy and sorrow.

All: Let us remember the one who shows the way and who goes with us in our tomorrows.



Sung Response

*Wait for the Lord
ELW #262*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

THE CHRIST CANDLE

We light the Christ candle, remembering that Jesus Christ is always in the center of our lives. He hears our cries, he knows our hearts and, in the midst of all our thoughts and emotions, he offers us hope and healing.

All: Let us hold fast to the love we cherish, each and every day.

~Please be seated.~

THE WORD

SERMON

VICAR CHRISTIAN CEDERSTROM

+ HYMN OF THE DAY

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

ELW #282 + Verses 1 & 4

1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

✠ PRAYERS

Leader: In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask our God for all the good things we need: For ourselves as we participate in this Christmas as special people coping with our many different losses. God, receive our prayer.

All: *And in your mercy, answer.*

Leader: For our families and friends, that they may continue to help and support us. God, receive our prayer.

All: *And in your mercy, answer.*

Leader: For any person we have loved who has died, for all the losses we know in our lives, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise. God, receive our prayer.

All: *And in your mercy, answer.*

Leader: For our family and friends, that you may bless them with love, peace, and joy. God, receive our prayer.

All: *And in your mercy, answer.*

Leader: For peace throughout the world as proclaimed by the Christmas Angels on that faraway hillside. God, receive our prayer.

All: *And in your mercy, answer.*

Leader: For greater understanding of the lessons of love and acceptance as taught by Jesus your Christ. God, receive our prayer.

All: *And in your mercy, answer.*

Leader: All these things we ask in the name of the one we call Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

All: *Amen.*

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always!

All: *And also with you!*

Leader: Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

OFFERING

*All Offerings in the Plate will be Donated to **ELCA Good Gifts.***

✠ OFFERTORY HYMN

Christ Be Our Light
ELW #715 + Verses 1 & 5

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

5 *Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. **Refrain***

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957
Text © 1993 Bernadette Farrell.

Refrain

*Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

✠ OFFERTORY PRAYER

Presider: Generous God,
you have created all that is,
and you provide for us in every season.
Bless all that we offer,
that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing.
In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray.

All: *Amen.*

HOLY COMMUNION

✠ THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Presider: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

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

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

✠ PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

✠ HOLY, HOLY

LBW pg. #69

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

✠ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us, his death and resurrection, we await his coming again when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup, that, held and nourished by you, we may live as your children, shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

All: Amen.

✠ THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom 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.**

Presider: Come to the banquet,
for all is now ready.

NOTES ABOUT COMMUNION:

Communion will be distributed separately to each side of the congregation, first to the left side, then to the right side. Please walk down the side aisle where you may receive the elements. The wine is red and grape juice is white. Gluten free wafers are available on request.

If you wish not to receive communion, simply cross your arms across your chest to receive a blessing and, if you wish, an anointing with oil.

After receiving the elements if you choose, you may also receive an anointing with oil. This anointing on your forehead is a very old gesture used to give strength on the journey of being healed and healing others.

Please follow the Ushers directions.

COMMUNION HYMN

Joy to the World
ELW #267 + Verses 1, 3 & 4

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

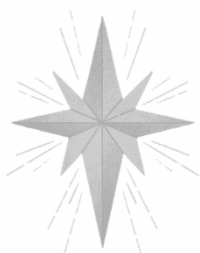
✠ TABLE BLESSING & POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Presider: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen.

Presider: We give you thanks, generous God,
for in this bread and cup
we have tasted the new heaven and earth
where hunger and thirst are no more.
Send us from this table as witnesses to the resurrection,
that through our lives, all may know life in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.



SENDING

BLESSING FOR THE LONGEST NIGHT

All throughout these
months
as the shadows
have lengthened,
this blessing has been
gathering itself,
making ready,
preparing for
this night.

It has practiced
walking in the dark,
traveling with
its eyes closed,
feeling its way
by memory
by touch
by the pull of the moon
even as it wanes.

So believe me
when I tell you
this blessing will
reach you
even if you
have not light enough
to read it;
it will find you
even though you cannot
see it coming.

You will know
the moment of its
arriving
by your release
of the breath
you have held
so long;

a loosening
of the clenching
in your hands,
of the clutch
around your heart;
a thinning
of the darkness
that had drawn itself
around you.

This blessing
does not mean
to take the night away
but it knows
its hidden roads,
knows the resting spots
along the path,
knows what it means
to travel
in the company
of a friend.

So when
this blessing comes,
take its hand.
Get up.
Set out on the road
you cannot see.
This is the night
when you can trust
that any direction
you go,
you will be walking
toward the dawn.

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✠ SENDING HYMN

My Life Flows on in Endless Song
ELW #763 + Verses 1 & 2

- 1 My life flows on in endless song;
above earth's lamentation,
I catch the sweet, though far-off
hymn
that hails a new creation.

Refrain

No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and
earth,
how can I keep from singing

2 Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing?

Refrain

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899

✝ DISMISSAL

Leader: Go in peace, go in light. Remember that you are not alone.

All: Thanks be to God!

INSTRUMENTAL POSTLUDE

**THANK YOU FOR WORSHIPING WITH US TONIGHT.
GOD'S PEACE BE WITH YOU.**

WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Analyse Triolo	Presider
Vicar Christian Cederstrom	Preacher & Assisting Minister
Olivia Lu	Organist
Jean Klarman	Musician
Tatyana Rajbali	Wreath Lighter / Communion Asst.
Jean Klarman	Reader
Julia Klarman	Usher
Sarah Klarman	Usher/Communion Asst.
Rakesh Rajbali	Videographer

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