

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Nurture with Love, Serve with Hope
NOVEMBER 28, 2021 **PASTOR ELAINA SALMON**

Prelude *“To You, O Lord, I Lift My Soul”*

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of Advent Wreath

P Each year, we light candles as we prepare for the coming of Christ. This is a season of waiting for God’s future of justice and righteousness, when the whole of creation is rescued from brokenness and death, and all the world is made right. It’s a season of expectation for God’s reign of love to come in all its fullness.

Today, we light a candle of hope. In our Christian faith, hope is so much more than optimism. It’s trusting that God who has been faithful in the past—when God became flesh to be with us—will be faithful in the future and come again to redeem the world. Christian hope is bold. Even when all seems lost and despair could overwhelm us, we put our hope in God whose compassion and love is from everlasting.

P Let us pray,
Holy God, creation groans, nations rage, and sorrow and anger creep in our hearts. The world is waiting for you to guide us through shadow and heartache.

C **Come, Lord Jesus,
and lead us on to a morning where the promise shines.**

P As we light this candle, we proclaim our hope in your reign of love to come. Kindle the flame of hope within us, so that we may look upon the world and all its heartache and still trust in your promised day.

C **Come, Lord Jesus,
and lead us on to a morning where the promise shines. Amen.**

Song *“Peace, Peace, Peace”*

*Hope, hope, hope – The light of Christ is hope.
In all our darkness Christ is shining,
Leading upward, faith refining.
Hope, hope, hope – The light of Christ is hope.*

Greeting

P 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.**

Prayer of the Day

P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Song “*Waiting*”

The First Reading Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The LORD is our righteousness.”

A The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 25

A To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

C **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

A Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

C **Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

A Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

C **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

A Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

C **You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

A You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

C **All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

Gospel Acclamation “*Alleluia*”

Gospel Luke 21:25-36

Jesus said: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation

will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day “*When a Star is Shining*”

Prayers of the People

A In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God’s presence.

(a moment of silence)

A God of presence and peace, strengthen your church around the globe to proclaim the message of your love coming to the world. Open our hearts to recognize your face in all people and in all of creation. We pray for our companion congregation, Bethlehem Church in Chiawelo, South Africa. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A God of mighty redwoods and microscopic plants, fields and city parks, the wind and the waves, be a healing balm to our wounded planet. May we nurture what you have lovingly created. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A God of equity and compassion, bring righteousness and goodness to all peoples of the earth. Give a heart of discernment and integrity to leaders in our communities. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A God of comfort and care, be present with those who watch and wait. Come to all who await births, deaths, divorces, new unions, new jobs, retirements, healing, and life transitions of every kind. We pray for.....Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A God of promises kept and new dreams awakened, shelter your people from destructive storms. We pray for those whose lives have been upended by natural disasters, for the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and other relief organizations. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A God of the lost and forgotten, we pray for the work of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois as they care for the vulnerable throughout our state. Through our gifts, may children be blessed this Christmas season and may they know your love. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

- A God of companionship and community, we give you thanks for the saints who journeyed with us and now abide in you. Even in distress and uncertainty, make us confident that your promises endure forever. Hear us, O God.
- C **Your mercy is great.**
- A God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.
- C **Amen.**

THE MEAL

Offering

(Our offering is an act of worship and thanksgiving for all God has first given us. Our gifts support the mission of the church to “nurture with love and serve with hope.”)

Offering Song *“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”*

Offertory Prayer

- A God of our waiting and watching,
we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives
to the service of all your people.
Prepare the way before us
as we meet you in this simple meal,
through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.
- C **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer

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 our thanks and praise.**

P Mighty One, you have done great things for us, and holy is your name! From generation to generation, you have shown mercy to those who call on you. The strength of your arm has scattered the proud and cast down kings. The opening of your hand has filled the hungry with bread and with justice. In the fullness of time, you kept the promise you made to our ancestors, giving to us your own Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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 to them to drink saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

- United at this table, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
- C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
- P Send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts, O God, and send her into and through this gathered people, that, fed and strengthened with this holy food, we may magnify your presence in our world, until Christ comes again in glory.
- C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P We await his advent, O God, with all the saints of every time and place. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.
- C Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

- P 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, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

- P Come to Christ's banquet.
Feast on God's gift of grace.

Communion Distribution

The congregation is invited to come forward to receive the bread and wine from our worship leaders. Please only remove your mask for eating the bread and drinking the wine/grape juice. If you would prefer, you may continue to commune at your seat using the prepackaged elements.

Communion Songs

*"Lamb of God"
"What Feast of Love"*

Communion Blessing

- P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
- C Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

- A Most High God,
you have come among us at this table.
By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,
through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.
- C Amen.**

Blessing

P The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

C **Amen.**

Sending Song ““Christ, Be Our Light” #715 (v. 1, 2 & 5)

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

*Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness. Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

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

Dismissal

P Go in peace to nurture with love and serve with hope!

C **Thanks be to God.**

Acknowledgements

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PRAYERS FOR THE COMMUNITY

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| EJ Ahlberg | Nancy Iwan | Gwen O'Neill |
| Georgette Beck-Brandt | Monica Johnson | Frank Roy |
| David Bergmark | Peyton Kirk | Joseph Rymkey |
| Rev. Glenn Bergmark | Lenny Kobilca | Ben Sabourin |
| Sharon Bolerjack | Julie Kowal | Joe Sanfillipo |
| Yvonne Borkhuis | Rick Kwasneski | George Scheel |
| Sean Clark | Virgie Kwasneski | Bernie Schroeder |
| Gary Cobbett | Don Laasch | Tim Schroeder |
| Beau Dowling | Rev. John Lang | Virginia Schroeder |
| Jim Driscoll | Nancy Lang | John Shea |
| Finley Engnell | Sue Lucheon | Gene Sobba |
| Laura Erickson | Scott Lundgren | Vivian Tiemeier |
| Elwood Faulhaber | Dede Machowski | John Tomaskovic |
| Judy Faulhaber | Jim McKeever | Kyle Williams |
| Julie Hayes | Frank Miller | Mike Woods |
| Marie Heeren | Ruth Ann Miller | Justin Wormsley |
| Mike Hoffman | Omni Rook Myers | Stephanie Wormsley |
| Frank Iwan | Linda Nelson | Janet Zingen |

For Sean Acosta, Dustin Johnson, Steve Kleinfelder, Patrick Naughton, Chad Peters, Mitch Pohlman and all others serving our country and their families.

For those we name in our hearts, and for those who have not yet found Jesus.

Nurture with Love, Serve with Hope

When we are at our best you will see us:

- *Building relationships that connect people in meaningful ways*
- *Growing spiritually through the adventure of the Gospel, then and now*
- *Engaging our community with a servant's heart*
- *Welcoming and offering acceptance to all those we meet*
- *Giving generously out of the abundance of God*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERVING TODAY — Don Garling

MUSICIANS — Sue Gray, David Bergmark, Sandy Doebert, Carol Rhoades and Shawn Salmon

TECH CREW — Gary Gray, Sue Gray and Zach Howell

JOURNEY WITH JESUS STORYTELLING RETREAT!

You are invited to join us for a storytelling retreat on Saturday, January 15 from 9:30am-3pm. This launches our 150th Anniversary year as we aim to collect the faith stories of our congregation members. The retreat will be held at the Carmelite Spiritual Center in Darien (just 10 minutes away). Cost is \$30/person. Join us as we listen to our lives, look for God's faithful presence, and connect with one another along our journey with Jesus. Sign-up sheet is now available!

ADVENT SERVICES

We will be having Advent Services on Wednesdays, Dec 1, 8, and 15. Join us at 7pm for a time of prayer and worship to infuse this season with quiet and sacred moments. On December 1, the Prayer Group will also meet following the service. All are welcome to connect with our family of faith and share in a time of prayer.

CAROLS AND COCKTAILS

You are invited to join us for Carols and Cocktails on Friday, December 10 at 7pm on Bethany's back lawn. Yep, we're doing this outside to be covid-safe, around the fire to keep us warm, and with festive drinks to celebrate the season. We'll sing some of our favorite Christmas songs and carols. Bring along a mug and a chair, if you wish.

PROJECT ROOM AT THE INN

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is collecting donations for Christmas gifts for children in their programming including children in foster care. Gift tags with a child's name are available to pick up. For this project, we do not need to purchase a gift for the child, but rather we are invited to make a donation so LSSI can provide a gift. Donations can be made using the QR code on the tag, making a donation online (lssi.org/donate), or mailing in a check to LSSI (1001 E. Touhy Ave. #50, Des Plaines, IL 60018). Donations are requested by December 10. Thank you for your generosity!

GIVING ENVELOPES

On October 28, the Finance Committee emailed a letter to the congregation with an update regarding offering envelopes and giving practices. Offering envelopes are available only upon request. Please let Marge (bethanylmt@aol.com) know if you would like a box. Offerings can also be placed in a plain envelope with your name on it or you can use our electronic giving option. Thank you always for your financial support of our ministry and proclamation of the gospel!

A GIFT TO THE BUILDING CARE FUND is given in loving memory of Ginny Connelly by The Kujawa Family.

A GIFT TO THE GENERAL FUND is given by Leslie & Michael Hall.

FREE PIANO!

Norma Johnson's daughters have a piano they would be happy to give away and even pay to have it moved to your home! If you're interested, please let Pr. Elaina know and she'll connect you to the family.

ELECTRONIC GIVING is available to support Bethany Church. It is fast, easy and secure. You can schedule a weekly or monthly contribution that is automatically debited from your savings or checking account. Make a one-time donation to a special fund; even direct the gift in honor or in memory of someone. Visit our website: bethanylemont.org and click the Donate button on the homepage.

DONATIONS TO THE OPEN PANTRY were given by George & Lorraine Repchak, Joseph & Jeanette Zuzich, Elsie Schultz, John Tomaskovic, Douglas & Marie DeGregorio, Hanna Schulz, Gloria Abboud, George & Geraldine Boyle, Don & Bernadette Turner, Lemont Lions Club, St. Alphonsus/St. Patrick School, Lynne Nelson and Judy Wilson.

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