**2nd Sunday of advent- december 10, 2023- zion, philipsburg**

**GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again.

**You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit’s fire.**

Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare.

**We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth.**

**Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG*Prepare the Royal Highway* (ELW 264)**

1 Prepare the royal highway;
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story:

Refrain
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

2 God's people, see him coming:
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! Refrain

3 Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing: Refrain

4 His is no earthly kingdom;
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding: Refrain

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Welcome to worship on this 2nd Sunday of Advent, December 10, 2023. Thanks to all who helped out with our Action Sunday activity last Sunday. It did not take long at all to pack the 50 bags. We still need a few items as we did not have enough blankets for all the bags. If you are out shopping and find some Christmas socks or gloves please consider purchasing some so that all have some kind of warmth.

Our Advent theme for this week is Giving Hope. Here is our ornament. Included in your bulletin is another ornament to take home as well as ideas for Giving Hope in the world.

Next Sunday is our reflective Advent 3 service. We will gather together after worship for some Christmas treats and there will be some Christmas cards to sign for Nithview.

On Thursday we will be holding another Holden Evening Pryer service at Trinity. All are invited to come for supper at 5:30 with the service beginning at 6:30.

Any other announcements?

**GREETING (ELW p. 213)**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

**KYRIE (ELW p. 213)**

Kyrie eleison: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christe eleison: **Christ, have mercy.**

Kyrie eleison: **Lord, have mercy.**

**CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 213)**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 215)**

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11**

A reading from Isaiah.

*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.*

 1Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 2Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
  and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.
 3A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”
 6A voice says, “Cry out!” And I said, “What shall I cry?” All people are grass,
  their constancy is like the flower of the field. 7The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass.
 8The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.
 9Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear, say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!”
 10See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him;
 his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
 11He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms,
 and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**

 1You have been gracious to your land, O Lord; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.
 2**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people** **and blotted out all their sins.**
 8I will listen to what the Lord God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.
 9**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,** **that your glory may dwell in our land.**
 10Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
 11**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,** **and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**
 12The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.
 13**Righteousness shall go before the Lord** **and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

**SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a**

A reading from 2 Peter.

*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.*

8Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. 9The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. 10But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.
 11Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, 12waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? 13But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.
 14Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; 15aand regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 216)**

**GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8**

The holy gospel according to Mark.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

1The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
 2As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
  ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’ ”
4John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 217)**

**HYMN OF THE DAY*All Earth Is Hopeful: Toda la tierra* (ELW 266)**

1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people who struggle to see
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.

2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";
she conceived him, "God with us,"
our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.

3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;
new highways opened, new protocols declared.
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!

4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live
in our world; he his present, in neighbors we see
our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.

**CREED (ELW p. 217)**

Together with the whole church let us profess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,** **creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,** **who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,** **suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died, and was buried;** **he descended to the dead.\***

**On the third day he rose again;** **he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,** **and he will come 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.**

**PRAYERS 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.*

Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed. Merciful God,

**We wait with hope for you.**

Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal. Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures. Merciful God, **we wait with hope for you.**

Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, commonwealths, political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. Merciful God, **we wait with hope for you.**

Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety, or all who feel lonely or forgotten. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain. Merciful God, **we wait with hope for you.**

Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season. Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments and all suffering from any illness or injury. Protect expectant parents. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil. We remember Sarah, Chris, John, Vivian, Felix, Erin, Elizabeth, Zoli, Donna, Nick, Alea, Nancy’s sister Jane, our members in long term care Robert, Beatty, Evelyn and Rob, and those we name either out loud or in the silence of our hearts. Merciful God, **we wait with hope for you.**

With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. Inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth. Merciful God, **we wait with hope for you.**

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

**PEACE (ELW p. 217)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**THANKSGIVING**

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY-*Wait for the Lord* (ELW 262)**

**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.**

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD (ELW p. 220)**

Holy God, the Beginning and the Ending, our Hope as we wait, we praise you for joining us to your people of old. We bless you for your prophets who call us to righteousness and promise a new earth with peace for all.

For the Word of your covenant, we thank you, O God.

We praise you for the coming of Jesus our Lord, who lifts up the lowly, heals the suffering world, and proclaims your way of mercy and truth.

For your Word who is Christ, we magnify you, O God.

Send your Spirit on all who receive your Word. Nurture our faith with your grace,

accompany us with your might, and empower our zeal for your justice and joy.

For your Word through the church, we praise you, O God.

All praise to you, holy God, today, tomorrow, and forever. **Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 221)**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**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 SONG*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* (ELW 249)**

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!

2 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.

3 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.

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

5 All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Spirit, evermore.

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

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