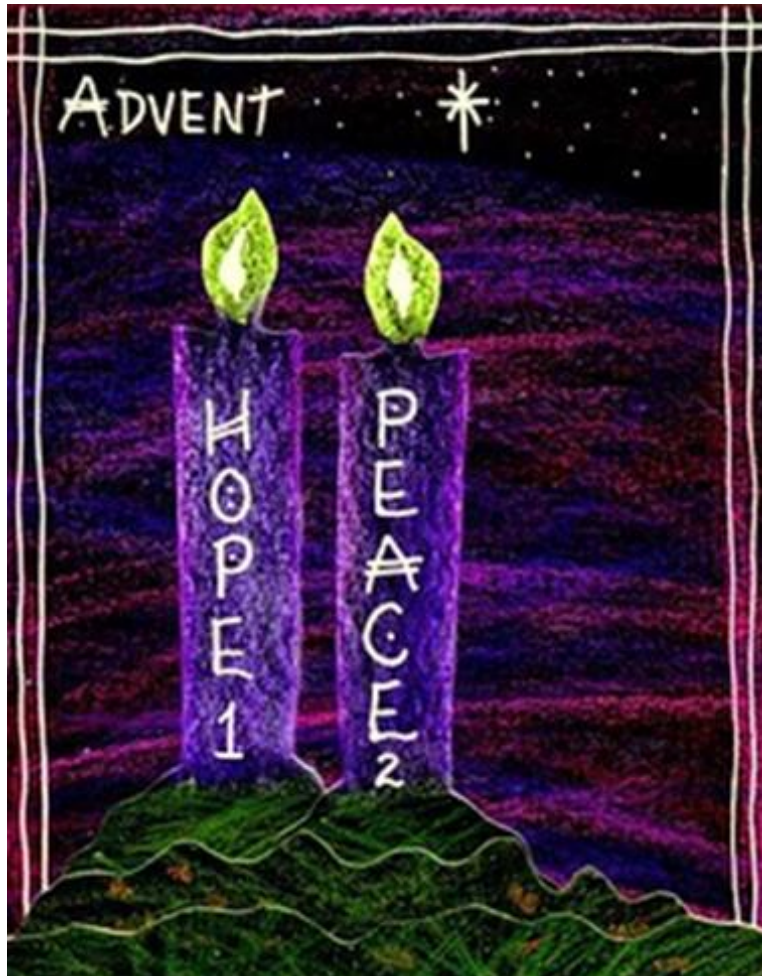


# ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Second Sunday of Advent



December 6, 2020

10:00 a.m.

## Second Sunday of Advent

### INTRODUCTION

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

### PRELUDE



+ GATHERING +

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

**Congregation (C) Amen.**

P Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

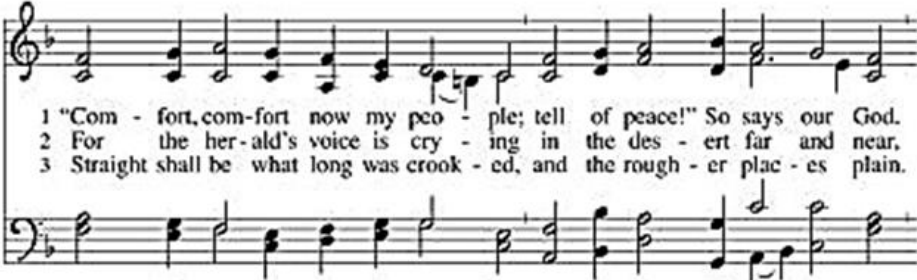
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Loving and forgiving God,

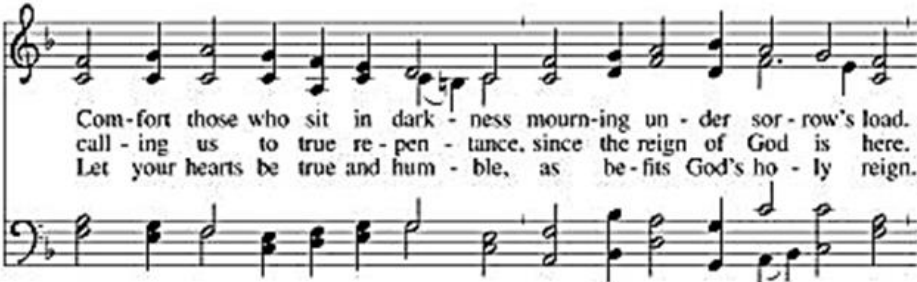
**C we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

P People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, † comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**



1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,  
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.  
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!  
 Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,





Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.  
 Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum - ble fa - vor.  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.


## GREETING

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

## KYRIE

  
A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: Lord, . . . . have mer - cy: Lord, have mer - cy.

  
A Chri - ste e - le - i - son: Christ, . . . . have mer - cy: Christ, have mer - cy.

  
A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: Lord, . . . . have mer - cy: Lord, have mer - cy.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P 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.
- C **Amen.**

**Come Now, O Prince of Peace**  
*Ososǒ, ososǒ*

*O - so - sǒ o - so - sǒ, pyong - hwa - ūi - im - gŭm*  
 1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.  
 2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.

*u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sǒ.*  
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.  
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.



+ WORD +

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11**

*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.*

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak 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.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every 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. <sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

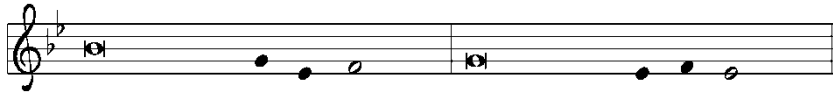
<sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. <sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower

fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. <sup>9</sup>Get 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!" <sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. <sup>11</sup>He 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.

Reader       The word of the Lord.

**C               Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: 85:1-2, 8-13**       *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader <sup>1</sup>You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;  
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.

**C       <sup>2</sup>You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people  
and blotted out | all their sins.**

L       <sup>3</sup>I 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.

**C       <sup>9</sup>Truly, your salvation is very near to | those who fear you,  
that your glory may dwell | in our land.**

L       <sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together;  
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.

**C       <sup>11</sup>Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth,  
and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.**

L       <sup>12</sup>The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,  
and our land will | yield its increase.

**C**      <sup>13</sup>**Righteousness shall go be- | fore the LORD  
and shall prepare for | God a pathway.**

*Spoken after the psalm is sung:*

**C**      **Amen.**

**SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a**

*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.*

<sup>8</sup>Do 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. <sup>9</sup>The 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. <sup>10</sup>But 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.

<sup>11</sup>Since 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, <sup>12</sup>waiting 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? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15a</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Reader      The word of the Lord.

**C**      **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
Al - le - lu - ia. You have the words of e - ter - nal life.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

### GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

*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.*

**P** The holy gospel according to Mark, the first chapter.

**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. <sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; <sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And 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. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He 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. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**P** The gospel of the Lord.

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

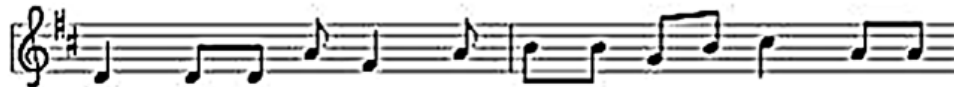


SERMON *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

HYMN OF THE DAY 266 *All Earth Is Hopeful*



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra, al Sal - va - dor  
1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!  
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:  
3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;  
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el  
Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task; this, the  
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -  
new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most  
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -  
la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how  
ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -  
here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All  
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad, dar - nos li - ber - tad.  
God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.  
stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.  
clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!  
Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

Text: Alberto Tualé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946  
Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Tualé  
Spanish text and music © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publicacions, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

## NICENE CREED

A Let us 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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.*

*Congregational response: Your mercy is great.*

## OFFERING HYMN



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were  
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.  
Gath - er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we  
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,  
Lord, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

+ SENDING +

**BLESSING** *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ☩ now and forever.

C Amen.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SENDING HYMN                      253      *He Came Down*

1 He came down that we may have love;      he came down that we may have love;  
2 He came down that we may have light;      he came down that we may have light;  
3 He came down that we may have peace;      he came down that we may have peace;  
4 He came down that we may have joy;      he came down that we may have joy;

he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have light;      hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er-more.  
he came down that we may have peace;  
he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional  
Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949  
Arr. © 1986 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent, 7404 S. Mascot Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.  
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## DISMISSAL

- A      We believe out loud that God’s mission for us is:
- C      to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God’s call.
- P      Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
- C      Thanks be to God.

+ + +



FLOWERS ARE GIVEN  
TO THE GLORY OF GOD  
AND THE CELEBRATION OF  
JAN AND JERRY HARRISON'S  
58TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

Calendar for December 6 - 13

Dec.	06	Sun.	10:00 a.m.	Worship (online), Second Sunday of Advent
	09	Wed.	Noon	Bible study (online)
	13	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship (online), Third Sunday of Advent

Next Sunday's Readings, Third Sunday of Advent:

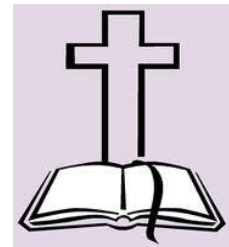
[Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11](#)

[Psalms 126](#)

[1 Thessalonians 5:16-24](#)

[John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)

**PRAYER REQUESTS**



**New concerns:** Cindy Suhrweir recovering from surgery; Barb Guttenplan (sister-in-law of Martin Guttenplan) for a full recovery as she undergoes cancer surgery; child of Pr. Katrina Foster (friend of Cheryl), for healing of inoperable cancerous brain tumor.

**For the sick:** Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor); being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Jamie Ann Meyers (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White); Gerhard Hofer (brother-in-law of Ridy Hofer) .

***In treatment for cancer:*** Stephanie Barber; Peter Torlucci (brother of Margaret Bowers); Kamie Stonemetz (daughter of Jim Christianson); Cathie Nitti (niece of Sharon Simmons); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Isabell Cintron (friend of Sharon Simmons); Sarah Lucas (friend of Cassandra White); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Tiffany Nuce and unborn baby (family of Barbara ODonnell); Chris Dickman (synod councilmember).

***For health and protection:*** For all affected by coronavirus: those experiencing mental health difficulties due to isolation; those with the disease struggling to recover; those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personal, EMTs, the millions of unemployed people, etc. All immigrant families split apart by US Government; for the unaccompanied children entering the US, including those “unaccounted for”.

***For prisoners:*** Femi and Eddie; all those on death row.

***Other concerns:*** Karen Olson; Blanche White (Melissa Barton).

***Church concerns:*** St. Stephen’s Congregational Council; The Florida-Bahamas Synod Council all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola .

***World concerns:*** For all recovering in the Florida Panhandle from Hurricane Michael, including Messiah Lutheran Church; the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands continuing to recover from hurricanes; migrants fleeing violence in Central America; all those migrants and asylum seekers imprisoned by the US government; the people of Venezuela (birthplace of Bp. Suarez) and Hong Kong; for the Supreme Court as it considers cases involving the LGBTQ community.