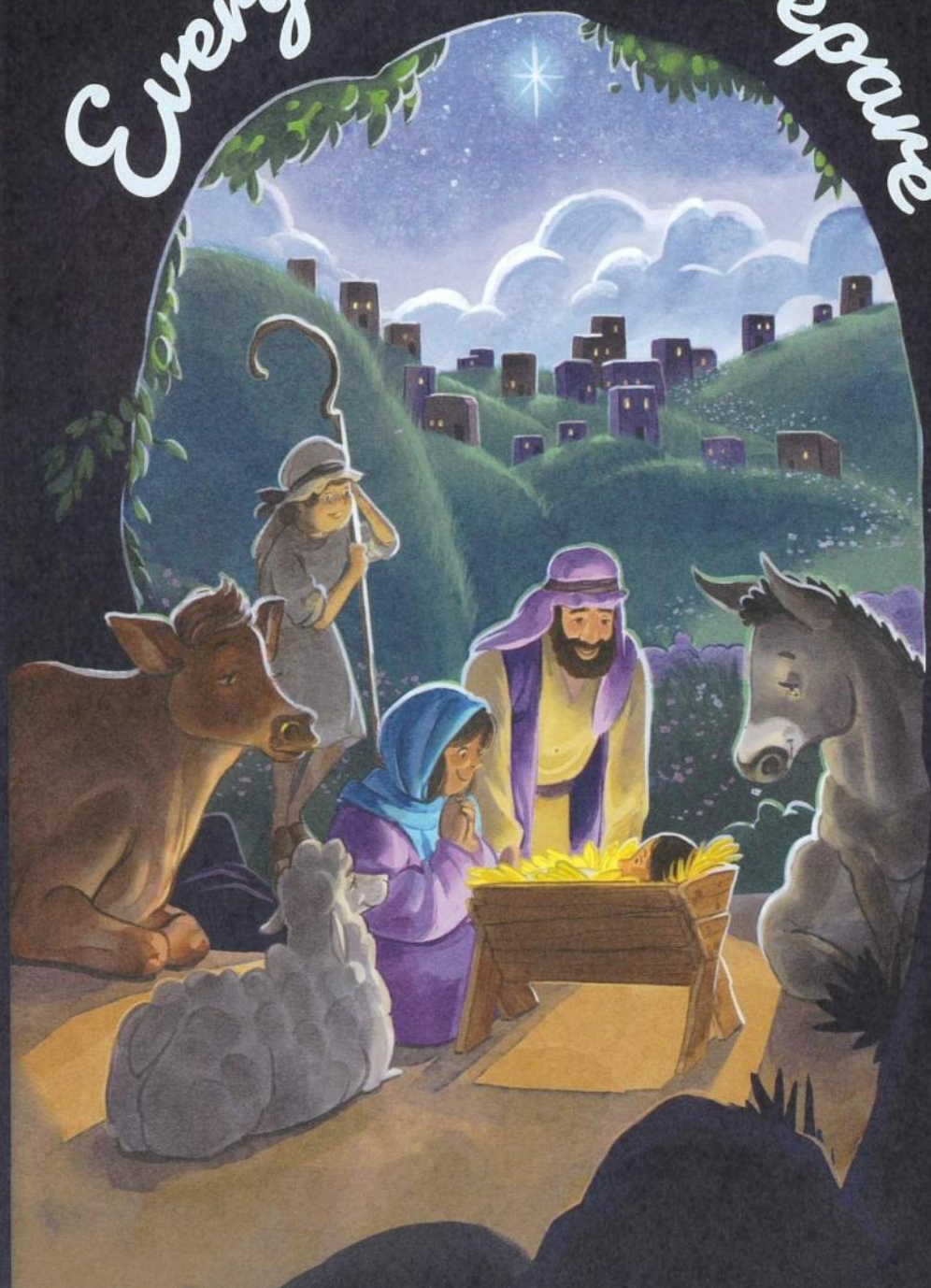


Every Heart Prepare



ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

22130 Ottawa Rd. Apple Valley, CA. 92308
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1645, Apple Valley, CA 92307
Phone: (760) 247-7392, FAX: (760) 247-9014
Pastor@ascensionav.org; office@ascensionav.org
Website: www.ascensionav.org
Rev. James Harris, Pastor

ADVENT MID-WEEK TWO SERVICE

1:00 p.m. December 10, 2025

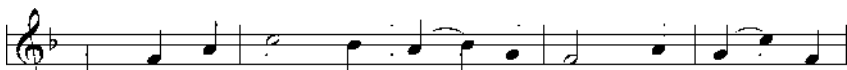
OFFICE OF PRAYER & PREACHING

Thoughts as we gather:

“Prepare!” is often the watchword of the season as the world gets ready for another celebration of Christmas. An integral part of any preparation is decoration. We see decorations everywhere this time of year. The world may not comprehend the real meaning of Christmas, but even secular preparations use many of the same decorations beloved by Christians—an appropriation we shouldn’t mind at all, because these decorations point us to Christ. This year, as we look forward again to the coming of the Messiah, we take a fresh look at how the adornments of the season draw our eyes to Jesus, that we may more richly behold the love, peace, joy, and hope He comes to bring as this beauty is set before us.

Today, we focus on lights. You see them everywhere this time of year. Some neighborhoods even compete, and tourist destinations spend millions on attractive light displays. Like evergreens, this is something nonreligious people do this time of year without appreciating their true significance. Yet we know that Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). He came to restore righteousness to the world. This restoration continues to unfold through the ministry He has entrusted to His church. As Zechariah sang, “In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace” (LSB, Benedictus, Morning Prayer). We gather this evening to bask in the light of Jesus that His Word would have its way with us and so reflect His saving light into the darkness that remains in our world.

349 Hark the Glad Sound



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, In Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, The bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, Thy wel - come



prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare a
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be - fore Him
 soul to cure, And with the trea - sures of His
 shall pro - claim, And heav'n's e - ter - nal arch - es



throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.
 burst, The i - ron fet - ters yield.
 grace To en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 ring With Thy be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–51
 Tune: Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

OPENING VERSICLES

- P** This is the day which the Lord has made;
- C** let us rejoice and be glad in it.
- P** From the rising of the sun to its setting,
- C** the name of the Lord is to be praised.

- P** Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.
- C** Our God shall come; He does not keep silence.
- P** Prepare the way of the Lord.
- C** Make His paths straight.
- P** Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness.
- C** Let the earth open, that salvation may sprout forth.

- P** From the rising of the sun to its setting,
- C** the name of the Lord is to be praised.

- C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT CANTICLE

LSB 261



■ The Lord God is my strength and my song, and



He has be - come my sal - va - tion.



With joy will you draw wa - ter from the



wells of sal - va - tion. And you will say in that



day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call up - on His name,



make known His deeds a - mong the peo - ples, pro -



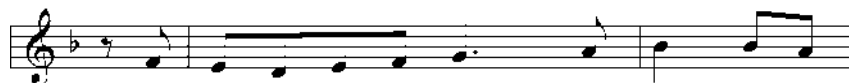
claim that His name is ex - alt - ed."



The Lord God is my strength and my song, and



He has be - come my sal - va - tion.



Sing prais - es to the Lord, for He has done

glo - rious - ly; let this be made known in all the
earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O in -
hab - i - tants of Zi - on, for great in your midst is the
Ho - ly One of Is - ra - el.
Refrain
The Lord God is my strength and my song, and
He has be - come my sal - va - tion.
Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son
and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will
be for - ev - er. A - men.



Sit

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 9:1-2, 6-7

P A reading from Isaiah, the ninth chapter.

¹ But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,
and His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of His government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

¹⁵Glad songs of salvation
are in the tents of the righteous:
“The right hand of the LORD does valiantly,
¹⁶**the right hand of the LORD exalts,
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!”**

¹⁷I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the LORD.

¹⁸**The LORD has disciplined me severely,
but He has not given me over to death.**

¹⁹Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰**This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.**

²¹I thank You that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

²²**The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.**

²³This is the LORD’s doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

²⁴**This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

²⁵Save us, we pray, O LORD!
O LORD, we pray, give us success!

²⁶**Blessèd is He who comes in the name of the LORD!
We bless You from the house of the LORD.**

²⁷The LORD is God,
and He has made His light to shine upon us.

**Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!**

²⁸You are my God, and I will give thanks to You;
You are my God; I will extol You.

²⁹**Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;
for His steadfast love endures forever!**

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

2 Corinthians 4:3–6

³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL

John 1:1–9

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORY

P Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.

C **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**

P He shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

C **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**

P Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

C **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**

TEN COMMANDMENTS

- C** You shall have no other gods.
You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
Honor your father and your mother.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or
maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your
neighbor.

APOSTLES' CREED

- C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

- 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.

Sit

SERMON

936 Sing Praise to the God of Israel



1 Sing praise to the God of Is - ra - el! Sing praise for His
 2 God spoke by the proph - ets long a - go. His prom - ise on
 3 You, child, will go on be - fore the Lord As proph - et, His
 4 O bright, ris - ing Sun, now shine on us In need of il -



vis - i - ta - tion! Re - deem - ing His peo - ple from their sin.
 oath re - call - ing To A - bra - ham made in for - mer years:
 way pre - par - ing; To speak on be - half of God Most High.
 lu - mi - na - tion; Come seat - ter the shades of sin and death



Ac - com - plish - ing their sal - va - tion, Up - rais - ing a
 Of van - quish - ing foes ap - pall - ing; That those He de -
 His coun - sel of truth de - clar - ing; Rich mer - cy and
 And shat - ter their dom - i - na - tion. Be guid - ing our



might - y horn with - in The house of His ser - vant Da - vid!
 liv - ered from their fears Might glad - ly and tru - ly serve Him.
 grace for all where - by In - iq - ui - ty is for - giv - en.
 foot - steps on the path Of peace. in Your pres - ence dawn - ing!

Text: Stephen P. Starke, 1955

Tune: Christoph E. F. Weyse, 1774–1842

Text: © 1992 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000276

Tune: Public domain

OFFERING

PRAYER

- P** Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.
- P** For the faithful proclamation of Christ's saving name, that God's people may be strengthened in the true faith and His kingdom extended, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the holy Christian Church throughout the world and for all who confess the name of Christ, that God would guard and defend us from the temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For this congregation, its mission and its people; for the ability to meet the needs that arise as we do the work God has given us to do; and for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the educational institutions of our synod: for our preschools, our day schools and high schools, our colleges and universities, and for our seminaries, that those who teach and those who learn in them would be transformed by the wisdom of Christ, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For all who partake this day of Christ's holy body and blood, that in their eating and drinking they may receive the benefits of forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life and have a foretaste of the feast to come, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who have wandered from the faith, that the Holy Spirit would use us to call them home to the Father, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the government and all who have been set into positions of leadership, that they may use the authority entrusted to them honorably and for the good of the people, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For all who serve in worthy occupations, professions, arts, and sciences, that God would grant them skill and integrity in the performance of their responsibilities and valued service through their vocations, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who suffer from hunger, homelessness, poverty, or unemployment, that God's great mercy and love would preserve and relieve them, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**

- P** For all the faithful, that the Spirit would lead them to cheerful, generous giving from the bounty the Lord provides, to support the Church and to help those in need, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who are sick (especially *[name]*), that God would grant healing to their bodies and strength to bear their infirmities with patience and grace, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who mourn (especially *[name]*), that in their time of sorrow they would not lose hope but rely on God's promise that He will never leave them or forsake them, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who rejoice in the rich blessings of God, that they may always remember the Giver of every gift and give Him heartfelt thanks, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

- P** O holy and most merciful God, You have taught us the way of Your commandments. We implore You to pour out Your grace into our hearts. Cause it to bear fruit in us that, being ever mindful of Your mercies and Your laws, we may always be directed to Your will and daily increase in love toward You and one another. Enable us to resist all evil and to live a godly life. Help us to follow the example of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and to walk in His steps until we shall possess the kingdom that has been prepared for us in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

COLLECT FOR THE WORD

P Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

MORNING PRAYER

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT CANTICLE

LSB 266



C Christ has been raised from the dead! Al - le -



lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.



Christ our Pass - o - ver Lamb has been sac - ri - ficed.



Raised from the dead, He will nev - er die a - gain.



Death has no more do - min - ion o - ver Him.

Refrain

Christ has been raised from the dead! Al - le -

lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Dy - ing, Christ dies to sin, once for all. Liv - ing, He

lives to God. Count your - selves as dead to

sin and a - live to God in Christ Je - sus, our Lord.

Refrain

Christ has been raised from the dead! Al - le -

lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

BLESSING

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

C Amen.

357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

sts. 1, ref, 6

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
6 O come, Thou Day - spring from on high, And cheer us

cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
by Thy draw - ing nigh; Dis - perse the gloom - y

ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
clouds of night, And death's dark shad - ows put to flight.

Refrain
Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el

Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.
Tune: French, 15th cent.
Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

Service of Prayer and Preaching from Lutheran Service Book
Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright
© 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2025 Concordia Publishing House.



The Birth of Jesus Christ

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. (Luke 2:1–20)