

# Immanuel Lutheran Church



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## Third Sunday in Advent December 14, 2025



### AS WE GATHER

#### Waiting Without Wondering

John is the greatest of all the prophets, and yet he is not without anxiety. He came to prepare the way of the Lord but then found himself in prison—the world unchanged—and those who followed him uncertain about the future. Now, two thousand years later, we look around at our own world with the same anxiety. We are still waiting, but we are not waiting for improvements in the world around us or our own progress in holiness; we are waiting upon the Lord. God is at work, focusing our wondering hearts not at what might be but at what has been in the death and resurrection that gives us hope and confidence. Because of this, we wait for the future He has prepared to unfold, doing the work He has given us to do and sure that He will keep His Word and bring to fruition all that He has begun—in His own time.

## PRELUDE AND WELCOME

### ✠ PREPARATION ✠

**HYMN**      “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”      #345

*Please stand as you are able.*

### INVOCATION

**Pastor:**      In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:**      **Amen.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**      *Psalm 146:5, 7b-8a; Philippians 1:6*

**Pastor:**      Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

**People:**      **The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.**

**Pastor:**      Holy and gracious God,

**People:**      **I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.**

**Pastor:**      Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:**      **Amen.**

**Pastor:**      He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

**People:**      **Amen.**

✠ **WORD** ✠

**PSALM OF THE DAY** *hymnal page 219*

Pastor: O Lord, open Thou my lips,

People: ♪ And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

Pastor: Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

People: ♪ make haste to help me, O Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son ✠ and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Hallelujah!

**ANTIPHON**

Pastor: Oh, come, let us worship the Lord.

People: ♪ For He is our maker.

**VENITE** *hymnal page 220-221*

♪ O come, let us sing unto the Lord,  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.  
Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving,  
and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.

For the LORD is a great God  
and a great king above all gods.  
In His hand are the deep places of the earth;  
the strength of the hills is His also.

The sea is His, and He made it,  
and His hands form-ed the dry land.  
O come, let us worship and bow down,  
let us kneel before the LORD, our maker.  
For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture  
and the sheep of His hand.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son ✠ and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world  
without end. Amen.

## **SALUTATION**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: Let us pray.  
O blessed Lord, grant us watchful hearts to behold the mystery of Christ's coming without doubt or fear as we await the fullness of all that He promised, lest our hearts be deprived of joy and our anxieties steal away the peace He has planted in us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and to the end of the ages.

**People: Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**      Isaiah 35:1-10  
*("Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.")*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE**      James 5:7-11 *("Be patient ... until the coming of the Lord.")*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are able.*

**VERSE**      Luke 23:43

**Alleluia! Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You. Alleluia!**

**HOLY GOSPEL** Matthew 11:2-15 *("He who has ears to hear, let him hear.")*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

*The Gospel is read*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**THE APOSTLE'S CREED** *Found on the last page of your pew hymnal.*

*Please be seated.*

**HYMN** "Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come" #350

**SERMON** Pr. Mark Croucher

### **OFFERING AND OFFERTORY**

**HYMN** "We Give Thee But Thine Own" #781 v1-2

**We give Thee but Thine own,  
What e'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is Thine alone,  
A trust, O Lord, from Thee,**

**May we Thy bounties thus,  
As stewards true receive  
And gladly, as Thou blessest us,  
To Thee our first-fruits give!**

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That the church may proclaim the Good News to the poor,  
forgiveness to the sinner, and healing to all those afflicted in  
body or soul, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That hope may rule our hearts against despair and that we may  
know joy in the midst of trials, giving thanks that Jesus Christ  
has come to set us free from sin, death, and all our enemies, let  
us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That peace may calm our upset hearts and love direct our words and our actions, giving thanks that we shall be raised from this mortal life to everlasting life, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That the nations and all the people may be well served by good and faithful leaders, that violence be replaced with peace among the nations, and for our good citizenship, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That the home may be a place of blessing and love, that marriages may be kept holy, that the lonely may find friendship, and that we may serve one another in love, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That we may respect life and gladly serve children and support mothers with child and those whose desire for a child has yet to be fulfilled, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That all those afflicted in body or soul may know healing and peace and that the grieving may be comforted in their loss, especially Liz, Myron, Betty, Karla, Dan and Ian, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That we, through your Word and sacraments be granted the fullness of what is to come when at last the dead shall be raised and the heavens and earth be made new and all the people of God reunited in the eternal dwelling place of God Most High, let us pray to the Lord:

**People: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen.**

## **SALUTATION**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: ♪ And with thy spirit.**

## **BENEDICAMUS AND BENEDICTION**

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

**People:**   🎵 **Thanks be to God.**

Pastor:     The Lord bless you and keep you.  
              The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
              The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**People:**   🎵 **Amen.**

**HYMN**       “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns”       #348

## **POSTLUDE**

## **THE MESSENGER**

December 14, 2025

**WELCOME!** Dear guest, we pray that your worship with us is as spiritually enriching for you as your presence is encouraging to us. We invite you to sign our guest book in the foyer. Please leave your email address if you would like periodic updates from Immanuel. Most importantly, come back and worship with us again next Sunday.

**SERVING US TODAY:** Pr. Mark Croucher  
Dan Henggeler, Organist

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** Liz Kraft, Myron Kimber, Betty Peuster, Karla Kass, Dan and Ian Henggeler

**LAST SUNDAY'S ATTENDANCE:** 23 total – 3 guests

**THE LUTHERAN HOUR** theme for next Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> is **"Everybody Is Somebody"** Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler God sends His people--the Church--to be His letters to the world, delivering His Word of promise. (Romans 1:7)  
Listen online at <https://www.lutheranhour.org>.