

Sunday November 29, 2020 Advent 1

Prelude:

Welcome and Announcements:

Confession: In the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: ELW 242 *“Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn”*

Greeting: 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:

Prayer of the Day: Creator of the world, you are the potter, we are the clay, and you form us in your image. Shape our spirits by Christ's transforming presence among us, that we might live with confidence and faith in your grace and gentleness. **Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath as Hymn ELW 260 *"The King Shall Come"* is sung.

First Reading: Isaiah 64: 1 - 9

A reading from Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence – as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil –

To make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for

you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 25: *“To You, O Lord I Lift My Soul”*

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1: 3 - 9

A reading from First Corinthians.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind – just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you – so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Song to Welcome the Gospel: ELW 262 *“Wait for the Lord”*

Gospel: Mark 13: 24 - 37

The holy gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling

from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.

Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Homily: My Polish Grandmother, besides being genetically responsible for my clown nose, and my addiction to sugar and butter and all things delicious, was always watching for signs that alerted her to changes in the weather. As far as she was concerned, the weather channel was basically fake news. She knew better.

For her, a squirrel, running around in circles, meant that it was about to become very windy, with a possibility of tornadoes and cyclones. A dog barking for no apparent reason meant that a torrential rainstorm was coming. Different aches in different parts of her body predicted different types of weather as well.

She had a chart on the wall that detailed the steps to be taken when any of these signs appeared. My favourite was the instructions of what to do when the signs pointed to 40 below weather: Crawl into bed. Pull up your quilt. Stay there.

The prophet Isaiah longed for a sign that God was coming back to us. “Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence.” Isaiah was not praying for God to do anything subtle. He wanted God to knock us out of our complacency. Part of this was because Isaiah was worried that many had turned their faces from God and had started worshipping the many gods of their neighbours.

“Once again, let us see your presence” the prophet pleads, “send a sign that you are with us and that you are still thinking about us.”

And so, God does send a sign. But not the one that the prophet was necessarily asking for or that many faithful people were expecting. God is born among us in the flesh, as Emmanuel, God with us and God for us, in the face of Jesus, the Christ. Not only did God not hide from us, God entered into our very lives and humanity. Not in flood, not in storm or earthquake, but in the manger and on the cross, in death and life, and way beyond both death and life into eternity.

Through the years, there have been many Christians praying for a cataclysmic return of Christ. Some of this was a fear that they had been abandoned by God. These were Christians who usually

were enduring terrible persecution for their faith, so part of their hopes for Christ's return included their own vindication and the punishment of those faithless ones who had troubled them in this life. You can encounter that in the Book of Revelation, where you can see the early church drawing up a hit list for God to follow comprised of the enemies of the early church. There is a certain joy in exulting in the idea that God will eventually smack our enemies.

Scripture does not speak with one voice about the return of Christ, no matter what Christian fundamentalists would have us believe. If we try to interpret what the bible is saying outside of history and the context it was written in, we end up with some fairly scary and ignorant ideas that are not very faithful to the Gospel of Christ.

Do we seriously believe that our God, who sent his son to live among us and die for us, is about to bring our world to a spectacular end?

If you look at the Gospels, which, for Lutherans, is the lens by which we view all scripture, we see that Christ was continually returning to his disciples after his death and resurrection and that our Lord promised to be always with us, to the end of time, which is a wonderfully Semitic way of saying forever, into eternity...because with God time never ends. Christ also promised to never abandon us and to journey home with us to our Father's Heavenly home. You cannot do that if you are absent from our lives.

When Luther was asked what he would do if he knew that Christ was coming again tomorrow, his answer was simply, "I would plant a tree." For us, Christ our Lord is always coming among us,

with grace and mercy, and opportunities to grow in our love and faithfulness to the God who refuses to abandon us.

As we wait and watch for Christ this Advent season, we see him come to us as the Living Word of God, in the Bread of Life from Heaven placed in our very hands, and in the people around us who have become Christ's Body in the world. Everywhere we look, in every direction, we see Christ present, coming to us, in the past, present and future. So, we live boldly with faith.

Whatever the future holds, it will be the same gracious Christ that greets us and journeys with us every day of our lives. Choose to live in the hope that Christ brings, banish all fears, and celebrate with joy the one who always comes bringing life, healing and peace...no matter where we look with the eyes of faith. Amen.

Hymn: ELW 252 *"Each Winter as the Year Grows Older"*

Prayers of the Faithful: We seek the mighty God in the most unlikely places, as a child in a stable, and in an empty tomb. May God hear these prayers, which come from the unlikely corners of our lives. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give us ears to hear gracious God, and eyes to watch, that we may know your presence in our midst during this holy season of joy as we anticipate the coming of Jesus, the Christ, your Son, the Risen One. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant peace in our weary world and help us sing songs of peace with the angels, and do the holy work of reconciliation with your saints, who seek to do your holy will. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for Florence Felske, Richard Hubert, Dorian Verch, Sharon Watt, and all who seek your healing touch and the gift of your peace. Hold them in your mercy, and journey with them in

their illness, bringing them healing and peace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Comfort the family and friends of Edith Rahn as they mourn, and hold them in your mercy and the joy of our life in the Risen One. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are anxious in these troubled times. Help us be gentle and understanding to all who are struggling. Make us slow to judge others, and quick to choose the ways of compassion and grace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are ill with Covid-19 and for all who care for them, and all who are working on vaccines. Bless this Holy Work. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things, and whatever else you see that we need, grant us, gracious God. **Amen.**

Gathering all our prayers into one, we pray the prayer that you have 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.**

Blessing of the Gifts from the Heart Jam Jars:

Blessing: May our Gracious God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us in the Risen Life of Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sending Song: ELW

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude:



News and Announcements:

Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special Prayers: Florence Felske, Richard Hubert, Dorian Verch, Sharon Watt.

Please Pray for The Newly Baptized: especially this day we pray for little Huxley Edward Slaughter, his parents Ryan and Jena and godparents, Roger Slaughter, Rebecca Slaughter and Mark Mackinnon, that they may grow in their faith of our Lord and Saviour.

A DONATION has been made to CLWR by Mervin & Martha McKibbon in celebration of the baptism of their Great Grandson Huxley Edward Slaughter, son of Ryan and Jena Slaughter. *“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” Matthew 19:14*

Please Pray For Those Who Mourn The Loss Of Loved Ones: especially this day we pray for the family of Edith Rahn, who passed away on November 16, 2020, that they may find comfort in the promises of our risen Saviour.

CONFIRMATION GATHERING

Confirmation Gathering after worship (11:30 a.m.) today.

GLUTEN FREE COMMUNION BREAD

If you wish to receive a gluten-free host (bread) as we commune today, please let pastor Stephen know prior to this morning's

celebration or ask one of our guides to share that information with him.

GUIDING LIGHT UPDATE – Our December issue of the Guiding Light will be delayed by one week. Our worship and music committee is continuing to work on finalizing the times for our Christmas Eve services. This should be determined this coming week, at which time, it will be conveyed through the December Guiding Light. We thank you for your patience during this unprecedented time.

ZLW – Our Zion Lutheran Women meet this Wednesday, December 2nd at 2 p.m. in our Sanctuary. The theme for the meeting is “Christmas Preparations. Guest musicians will be Elva & Maria Merredew. Please join them.

JAM JAR FUNDRAISER

It is that time of year that your Social Ministry Committee is launching the Jam Jar Fundraiser. This year we have chosen **Gifts from the Heart** Program from CLWR (Canadian Lutheran World Relief). This is an exceptional program that assists families which in turn leads to self-sufficiency. It also helps their local economy. Depending on the monies raised will determine how we will help.

For example, last year \$75.00 would purchase a pair of goats for a family. These goats would provide milk to help feed their families. The goats would also breed in time to promote long term growth. A pair of oxen and plough was \$500.00. With a pair of oxen more soil can be tilled more quickly allowing time for other activities such as attending school. Some gifts are matched 3x (the oxen and plough) or 4x (Emergency food) thanks to Canadian Foodgrains and the Canadian Government. Our money has the potential to go far.

You may pick up a jar at the registration table to fill with change or other. Cheques are always welcome. If you wish to have a tax receipt, we will need your name and address or envelope number if there is cash only in the jar. This campaign will run until today. Thank you for your generous support.

Your Social Ministry Committee

CHRISTMAS SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

A virtual Christmas Service of Remembrance will be held on Saturday, December 12th at 2pm (www.mdbfuneralhome.com). The home page will provide a link to the service, which helps us remember our loved ones and comforts us in our grief.

GIFTS FROM THE HEART CATALOGUE – Give a meaningful gift from the comfort of home with Canadian Lutheran World Relief’s Gifts from the Heart catalogue. Your gift to a loved one will provide meaningful, tangible items for people around the world facing hunger, poverty and the threat of COVID-19. No matter which gift you choose, the gifts you give will change lives and touch your loved ones! Visit www.clwr.org/GFTH to learn more. Catalogues can also be picked up at the registration table by the entrance.

RAFFLE IN SUPPORT OF CAMP LUTHERLYN

Camp Lutherlyn is hosting a raffle with 13 various prizes to be given away. Tickets are \$10.00 each or 3 for \$20.00, and can be purchased from the church office, on line or from various members of the board. For more information, please check out their website (www.lutherlyncamp.ca) or their Facebook page. Draw date is December 12, 2020.

CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

If you wish to sponsor a poinsettia, or make a donation to a special fund in memory of a loved one, or in thankfulness to God for His many blessings, please make your **written** request on a donation form (see below), and deposit it either in the offering basket, place it in the office correspondence mailbox located on the steel office door by the elevator, or drop it in the office mailbox located on the front door.

Filling out one of these forms will ensure that your announcement will appear exactly as you wish. The cost for a poinsettia is \$12.00 and \$25.00. **The last day to order poinsettias is December 7th.** Your special Christmas donation may also be designated to one of the following funds: Building, Organ Restoration, Stained Glass Window Repair, Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), Good Shepherding, General, etc. **The last day to make this special request is December 20th.**

.....

Bulletin Announcements **Today's Date:** _____
Name: _____ Phone # _____
Donation Made to Which Fund: _____

(Choose either one or both from below)

Donation Made in Memory Of: _____

Donation Made in Thankfulness to God For: _____

Names of Individuals Making the Donation: _____

If you would like the announcement worded in a particular way, please write it here: _____

KIWANIS CLUB CHRISTMAS TOY & FOOD DRIVE

The Kiwanis Club of Pembroke is again holding a Christmas Toys and Food Drive in support of the purchase of Toys for less fortunate families in our community. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year it will be a virtual fundraising effort. In an attempt to limit the risk of contracting Covid-19, there will be no volunteers stationed at local stores. For the same reason, no actual toys or food will be collected. Funds raised will be used to purchase toys, which volunteers will place in safe bags for pick up by families who have registered for help.

Surplus funds received will be distributed to St. Joseph's Food Bank (50%), St Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen (25%) and The Grind (25%). Several other service groups and organizations are working together with Kiwanis to help with this project.

Donations can be made in three ways:

1. mailed to Pembroke Kiwanis , 961 Pembroke St, Pembroke ON K8A 8R4. Make cheques payable to Kiwanis Toy and Food Drive, or
2. eTransfer to ToyDrive@PembrokeKiwanis.org(use password Toys), or
3. Dropped off at Studio Dreamshare, 18 Pembroke St. W.

Receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more.

Thank you for your support in this important Christmas project.

Today's Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church's Production Crew:

Presider: Pastor Stephen Scheidt

Musician: Blaine Sack

Worship Assistant/Reader: Sandra Sell

Videorecorder: Ty Phannenhour

Projectionist: Krista Grosskleg

Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

Today's Scheduled Worship Leaders

Counters: Diane Hammel, Pam Duplessis, Wilmer Verch

Greeter: Patty Wegner

Guides: Doug & Pauline Malliff

Sexton: Koit Rull

This Week at Zion – November 30 – December 6

Monday	7 p.m.	Worship & Music Committee Mtg.
Tuesday	9:30 a.m.	Tai Chi (Intermediates)
	7 p.m.	Narcotics Anonymous
Wednesday	2 p.m.	ZLW Mtg.
		BULLETIN DEADLINE
Saturday		Synod Workshop for Church Council
Sunday	10 a.m.	Holy Communion with Guest Homilist, Rev. Doug Reble