



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH (MISSOURI SYNOD)
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Fourth Sunday In Advent [Rorate] 24 December 2017

The LORD fathered me the beginning of his work, the first
 of his acts of old [Proverbs 1.22]

WELCOME TO FAITH! GOD'S HOUSE, YOUR HOME! To the friends who know us and to the visitors who are with us for the first time, the pastor and members of Faith Lutheran extend you a sincere welcome. We pray that your faith will be strengthened by your worship with us. *We invite our guests to sign the guest book in the entry way and worship with us again.*

ORDER OF SERVICE—THE ORDER OF MORNING SERVICE—hymnal pg. 5
THE PREPARATION

Pre-service prayers (hymnal pg. 4; 102-109; 118; 170)

The Lighting Of The Advent Candle

TODAY WE LIGHT THE FOURTH CANDLE OF THE ADVENT WREATH. It is called the **ANGEL CANDLE**. This candle reminds us of the angel who announced Jesus' birth and who will come with Him on the Last Day.

Hymn #60 Hark, a Thrilling Voice is Sounding

At the final stanza, the congregation turns facing the processional cross

Invocation hymnal pg. 5

Confession/ Absolution hymnal pg. 5-6

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD—Jesus comes with His word to enlighten us

Introit: (Isaiah 45.8a, b; Psalm 19.1)

P: Rain down, you heavens, from above

C: And let the skies pour down righteousness;

P: Let the earth open, **C: Let them bring forth salvation.**

P: The heavens declare the glory of God;

C: And the firmament shoes His handiwork.

Gloria Patri pg. 6

Kyrie [Lord] pg. 7

Gloria in Excelsis [Glory in the Highest] **Omitted until Christmas**

Salutation/ Collect pg. 9

P: Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, and help us with Your great
 might, that by Your grace whatever is hindered by our sins may be

speedily accomplished through Your mercy; who lives and reigns with the
 Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

Epistle—

Philippians 4. 4-7 [EHV]

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always! I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Gradual: (Psalm 145.18, 21; 40.17)

P: The Lord is near to all who call upon Him,

C: To all who call upon Him in truth.

P: My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord.

C: And all flesh shall bless His holy name. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

P: You are my Help and my Deliverer;

C: Do not delay, O my God. Hallelujah!

Triple Hallelujah pg. 10

Gospel {alternate}: St. Luke 1. 39-56 [EHV] pg. 11

³⁹In those days Mary got up and hurried to the hill country, to a town of Judah. ⁴⁰She entered the home of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹Just as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴²She called out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³But why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴In fact, just now, as soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy! ⁴⁵Blessed is she who believed, because the promises spoken to her from the Lord will be fulfilled!"

⁴⁶Then Mary said,

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

⁴⁷and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior,

⁴⁸because he has looked with favor on the humble state of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹because the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm.

He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down rulers from their thrones.

He has lifted up the lowly.

⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things, but the rich he has sent away empty.

⁵⁴He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, remembering his mercy,

⁵⁵as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his offspring forever.

⁵⁶Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her home.

Apostles' Creed

pg. 12

Hymn: [tune #62]

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, Who ord'rest all things mightily;

To us the path of knowledge show, And teach us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

Sermon— Proverbs 8:1, 22-31: Does not wisdom call? Does not understanding raise her voice? ²²“The LORD fathered me the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. ²³Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. ²⁴When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. ²⁵Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, ²⁶before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. ²⁷When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, ²⁸when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, ²⁹when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, ³⁰then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, ³¹rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.”

O Wisdom Of Our God Most High

1. Guiding creation with power and love
2. Come to teach us the path of knowledge

[Silence for meditation]

Offertory

Offering

pg. 12

Stewardship Thought: Philippians 4:6 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Paul puts two things in opposition to each other: anxiety and prayer. So trade your worries for prayers! You have a Father who loves you and desires to hear your prayers and bless you.

The Prayer Of The Church

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Brief silence

Heavenly Father, throughout this Advent season we have heard that Christ has come in the flesh. He comes to us today in Word and Sacrament, and He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. Thank You for sending Your only begotten Son to take away the sin of the world and give us the gift of eternal life. Guide us by Your Holy Spirit, that we may be kept firm in Your Word and faith until we are received into Your eternal Kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of faithfulness, we rejoice that You fulfilled Your promise to send the Messiah. Grant that Your people may celebrate the birth of Christ by hearing the Word, singing Your praises and receiving the body and blood of Christ. Grant that those who hear the fulfillment of Your promise may also fulfil their own confirmation promises to regularly hear Your Word and receive the Sacrament. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of mercy, through Baptism You forgive sins, rescue sinners from death and the devil, and grant eternal salvation to all who believe. Sinners are given a new identity in Christ. We do not deny but confess that we have received all that is Christ's through Baptism, including His righteousness and the gift of eternal life. Bless all the baptized, that they may be bold and firm in their faith until they are added to the saints who have gone before us. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of truth, as John the Baptist served as the voice crying out in the wilderness, so also pastors continue to preach Your Word of truth in the wilderness of this fallen world. You send Your Spirit, who works faith through the Word and Sacraments. We give You thanks for the men You have raised up for this holy task. Bless them and their labors, that there may be a bountiful harvest. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all, just as You have raised up pastors to guide Your people into the way of truth, so also You have raised up many to help their neighbors through their various vocations. Bless all helping personnel, including firemen, law enforcement officers, doctors, therapists and those in the armed forces. Thank You for the services they offer, and grant that we may engage in every opportunity to help our neighbors in need. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of justice, You establish earthly government and teach us to obey those who rule over us. Send Your blessing upon all who make, administer and judge our laws, that Your people may serve You in peace. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, You teach us to make our requests known to You so that we are not anxious about anything. Send Your healing hand upon the sick and the suffering especially those of our parish and our loved ones. Grant that Your peace will guard them in Christ Jesus. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God with us, in the blessed Sacrament we receive the very body and true blood of Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. Grant that all who come to Your altar this day do so in repentance and faith for the forgiveness of sins and the confidence of salvation. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer pg. 14

Collect: Everlasting God, by the mouths of Your prophets and saints of old, You proclaimed the advent of Your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Desire of all nations, the Hope of Israel, the Redeemer of the world. Lead us to repent of all our sins, and so humble ourselves that we may be prepared to receive Him with gladness and to join in singing: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit ever one God, world without end.

Benediction pg. 14

Hymn #73 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

The congregation faces the processional cross as it leaves

Silent Prayer

Worship Continues With The Service of the Sacrament where Jesus comes to nourish us with His Body and Blood

I always sin, therefore I always go to Communion. –St. Ambrose

[De sacramentis, IV, 6, 28]

TELL THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today— **Christmas Eve Service** 7 pm

Service of Lessons and Carols preceding Service of the Sacrament

[Bring your poinsettia to beautify church and bring it back home with you]

Christmas Day— Start reading in *God Grant It* on page 72

07 January—Installation of new officers during service

Epiphany Dinner after service

14 January—Voters' Meeting after service

Please pray for: Virginia Butler, Dan and Jean Fraser, Jonna Holden, Arthur Scott, Karen Weiner; Mary Ellen Carl.



PRAYER OF COMMUNICANTS: O Lord, You ordained mysteries in our holy religion to exercise our faith and raise our profoundest adorations of Your divine majesty. You did not ordain them to encourage a bold arrogance in us to search into the depths of Your incomprehensible nature. Your presence in the elements of the bread and wine, by the influences of Your Spirit, and by the application of Your merits to the soul of the truly penitent, shall be sufficient for me to adore Your love, to revere Your Sacrament, and to come to Your table. O blessed Jesus, I beg the assistance of Your grace, and a happy communion between You and my soul. Amen. [Johann Gerhard, 1582-1637]



RECEPTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER: At Faith we offer Holy Communion to members in a separate brief service following morning services of Matins, Morning Prayer or Morning Service. Striving to confess and practice all that God has taught us in His Word, we offer the Blessed Sacrament to our own members and members of other congregations in fellowship with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as we express our unity of faith on the basis of all of God's Word [1 Cor. 10.16-17].



LUTHER NOTES: We must know where our sins have been placed, since there are only two places where they can be: either hanging on our necks, or on Christ, the Lamb of God. If they are on us we are lost; if on Christ, then we are free and saved.

PRAYER: Lord God, heavenly Father, it is right that we thank You that by John the Baptizer You have given us holy baptism—for it is rich in grace—and that You let us be baptized. For the sake of Your dear Son, Christ Jesus, You promise us in baptism the forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit and eternal life. We pray that You would keep us trusting in Your grace and mercy so that we never doubt Your promise to us in baptism, but that we, instead, are comforted by it in every temptation. By Your Holy Spirit grant that we keep ourselves from sin and remain in that purity to which we have come in baptism. And, when, in our human weakness, we fall and sin, grant that we do not remain laying in sin but that by true repentance we turn and again comfort ourselves with Your promise to us in baptism so that we may be saved eternally by Your grace. Amen.



EPISTLE: Philippians 4. 4-7 *Rejoice!* This joy is a fruit and result of faith.... It is impossible for a heart to rejoice in God which does not first believe in Him. Where there is no faith, there is only fear, flight, timidity, and sorrow as soon as God is even thought of or named; indeed, there is hatred and enmity toward God in such hearts. The reason for this is that the heart finds itself guilty in its conscience and has no confidence that God is gracious and favorable, since it knows that God is the enemy of sin and horribly punishes it.... It is the just and righteous who are to rejoice in the Lord. [Luther]

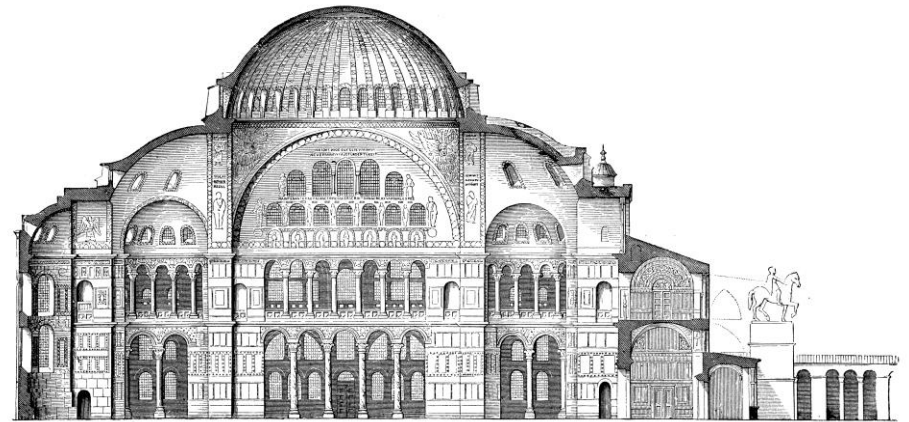


LUTHER NOTES on today's Gospel: Luke 1:39–56

“No proud man magnifies Christ, but himself. But he who exceedingly humbles himself exceedingly magnifies Him. Only the humble magnify Him, and to them He is a great Lord and exceedingly to be praised, because they are exceedingly blameworthy to themselves. The more you disparage yourself, the more you praise God, and the more you displease yourself, the more He pleases you, and vice-versa.” LW 11:316

LUTHER NOTES on John 1:19–28: “John was commissioned to point to this Christ and to lead all mankind to Him, so that He might induce all who were dead in sin and sitting in darkness and the shadow of death (Luke 1:79) to come to Him, to believe in Him, to be animated and illumined do by Him, and thus to become partakers of His grace and truth. For this was the purpose of Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection, that all believers in Him might be justified and saved.” LW 22:126

**O Wisdom,
Proceeding from the mouth of the Most High,
Pervading and permeating all creation,
Mightily ordering all things: come and teach us
the way of prudence.**



The Hagia Sophia [Holy Wisdom] in Constantinople

The most perfect church embodying the ideas and characteristics of the Byzantine style of architecture is the Hagia Sophia of Constantinople, which was built by Emperor Justinian from 532-537, after the destruction of the first Church of the Holy Wisdom. The ground-plan of this church shows a three-aisled, oblong basilica, its center being a circle inscribed in a square, which, in turn, is flanked by half-circles of the same diameter as the center one. In addition, there are three semicircular cells opening out from the half-circles, one of them serving as the apse. The church is 250 feet long by 235 feet wide, and the ceiling of the dome rises 180 feet above the center of the floor. At the time of its completion it was considered the most gorgeous church in the world, and even today it ranks with the most beautiful edifices of its kind.

[Source: *Concordia Cyclopaedia*, CPH, 1927, pg. 117-118]

**The Fourth Sunday in Advent
Rorate Coeli—Shower, O Heavens
24 December 2017**