



## **Service of the Word**

**December 6, 2020**

**Advent 2**

**"I Believe in Love: Daring Right Relationship"**

*In Home Worship with First Lutheran Church*

*Online resources can be found on our website*

*<https://www.firstlutheransandpoint.org/online-worship.html>.*

**Prelude** *(Play music that prepares your heart, mind, soul, and body for worship. Create a place to begin building your Advent wreath with a candle and means for lighting it ready. Other symbols of Advent: evergreens, the color blue and purple, and a creche / Nativity Set, if you have one.*

**"RAISE YOUR VOICE... DO NOT BE AFRAID." – THE MESSENGER**

# GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

## Welcome

### Crossing the Threshold

In both the Gospel of Matthew and Isaiah, a messenger appears as a sign from God, heralding a new era. In each passage, the words “do not be afraid” appear... offering a clue that the messenger—whether prophet or angel—was referencing something that induced fear in the recipient. A new way of being together, of relating and loving takes courage—eschewing the present order of things so that a new and better day can be born.

*[This poem was written on a wall in a Concentration Camp during World War II. Composer Mark A. Miller put these words to music and will be the central focus of our Advent preparations this season.]*

I believe in love, I believe in love,  
even when, even when I don't feel it.

*Reader:* The emptiness of loneliness

***People:* The emptiness of loneliness**

*Reader:* The wounds inflicted

***People:* The wounds inflicted**

*Reader:* The fear of the “other”

***People:* The fear of the “other”**

### Prayer of the Day

Holy One,  
we thank you for the glimpses we catch of your gift of daring love.  
Even in the midst of fear, of challenge, of struggle—  
even when we cannot see a better day  
when we will act like the human family we are,  
ignite the flame of love within us,

**People: ... that we might glow with its brilliance  
from the inside out.**

*[Congregation joins choir recording in unison]*

**I believe in love,  
I believe in love,  
even when... even when...  
I don't feel it.**

*Pastor:* Help us face this fear of difference  
and dare to see what love can do..

**Amen.**

*[for online worship]*

*Pastor:* You are invited to light your Advent 2 candle of Love at this time.

**GATHERING SONG: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (ELW 257, st. 1)**

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

## **WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 7: 1-14**

<sup>1</sup>In the days of Ahaz son of Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel went up to attack Jerusalem, but could not mount an attack against it. <sup>2</sup>When the house of David heard that Aram had allied itself with Ephraim, the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said to Isaiah, Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field, <sup>4</sup>and say to him, Take heed, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah. <sup>5</sup>Because Aram — with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah — has

plotted evil against you, saying, <sup>6</sup>Let us go up against Judah and cut off Jerusalem and conquer it for ourselves and make the son of Tabeel king in it; <sup>7</sup>therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

It shall not stand,  
and it shall not come to pass.

<sup>8</sup>For the head of Aram is Damascus,  
and the head of Damascus is Rezin.

(Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered, no longer a people.)

<sup>9</sup>The head of Ephraim is Samaria,  
and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah.

If you do not stand firm in faith,  
you shall not stand at all.

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup>Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. <sup>13</sup>Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Children's Time to Shine**

*"This Little Light of Mine" - Video*

*[One verse of sign language for this song is learned each Sunday.]*

'This Little Light of Mine' is a song that turns 100 years old this year! A woman named Fannie Lou Hamer sang it on a bus one day that had been stopped by police and it became a very important song that was sung a lot during the Civil Rights movement when some people wanted to dim the light of African Americans by not letting them vote in elections. So as we all learn more about the importance of music in making the world a better place, we are going to highlight this song! There are four verses and we are going to learn one each week." Learning it in sign language includes the one million people who primarily communicate in this language.

*[Julia Neuder will teach us via video, how to sign verse 2 today and continue with a new verse each week that we will post separately on our website if you want to learn or practice.]*

Won't let anyone blow it out!  
I'm going to let it shine!  
Won't let anyone blow it out!  
I'm going to let it shine!  
Let it shine  
Let it shine  
Let it shine!

Thank you, everyone, for “singing by signing!” I feel more LOVE already! When we add more music and more light to the world, we increase the Love in the world. We want people to know we care about them and want them to feel accepted and that the light that God gave them MATTERS in this world!

Thank you! Let's pray a repeat-after-me prayer.

Thank you, God...

*[repeat each line with the children]*

for giving us light... and for giving us music... Help our hands dance... and our hearts sing... to spread more [hope] ... in the world... Amen...

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 1: 1-25**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

<sup>2</sup>Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, <sup>3</sup>and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, <sup>4</sup>and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, <sup>5</sup>and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, <sup>6</sup>and Jesse the father of King David.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, <sup>7</sup>and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, <sup>8</sup>and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup>and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup>and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup>and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

<sup>12</sup>And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup>and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup>and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup>and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup>and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

<sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON -**

### **SONG OF THE DAY: “Lift Up Your Heads” (to the tune of Christ is Alive!)**

1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;  
behold, the King of glory waits!  
The King of kings is drawing near;  
the Savior of the world is here.

3 Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
make it a temple, set apart  
from earthly use for heav'n's employ,  
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

2 Oh, blest the land, the city blest,  
where Christ the ruler is confessed!  
Oh, happy hearts and happy homes  
to whom this King in triumph comes!

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. We pray especially for . . . (*current local, national, or international issues of peace or justice may be named*). Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work (*especially Nicholas of Myra*). Make their generous lives an example for all. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words, now and in creative ways throughout the week.*

## **Offering Announcement and Opportunities to "Fill the Night" with Hope** *(See the Advent 2020 Invite)*

## **OFFERING**

*If you would like to offer financial support for the ministries of First Lutheran, you can mail them to the church. 526 S. Olive, Ave. Sandpoint, ID 83864*

## **\*DOXOLOGY**

*[to the tune of "Give Thanks"]*

**Believe, with a loving heart!  
Believe, and shine your light!  
Believe, because the song we sing is sung for all!**

**And now let the weak say, "I am strong;"  
let the poor say, "I am rich  
because of what our God has done for us."  
Believe!**

## **SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

## **Carol of Resistance**

*Introduction to the Carol: It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*

Our Carol of Resistance was written in 1849 by a Massachusetts Unitarian minister, Rev. Edmund Hamilton Sears. One verse has been left out of several hymnals over the decades since then but the new hymnal, *Glory to God*, restores this powerful verse that refers to the love-song of the angels being drowned out by our warring nature:



*Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and we at war on earth hear not  
the love-song which they bring;  
O hush the noise and cease the strife,  
and hear the angels sing.*

Let us be reminded that we are to listen to the angel chorus and then join it, raising our voices with the message that love, not hate, is the answer.

*[the hymn begins]*

1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth,  
to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven’s all-gracious King”:  
the world in solemn stillness lay,  
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come,  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o’er all the weary world:  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o’er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and we at war on earth hear not  
the tidings that they bring;  
O, hush the noise and cease the strife  
to hear the angels sing!

4 And you, beneath life’s crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow,  
look now, for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing:  
O, rest beside the weary road,  
and hear the angels sing.

5 For lo, the days are hastening on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.

## **Benediction**

*Pastor:* You are invited to pick up this week's candle and  
Hold it high for the Benediction:

We wait for justice  
but we do not wait to work for change;

We wait for restored health  
but we do not wait to work to heal;

We wait for wholeness  
but we do not wait to work at binding brokenness;

We wait for peace  
but we do not wait to work to eliminate hatred.

And so, my friends, like bells ringing out the news  
that God is with us, Emmanuel.

Continue to fill the night left by sadness with messages of love.  
Go into your lives humming the tunes that keep that love alive in you  
and that spur you on in your work of justice and reconciliation.

Raise your voices and repeat after me...

“do not be afraid!”

**“do not be afraid!”**

**Amen!**

## **DISMISSAL**

This is the mission we share in Christ's name:  
**To Praise God! Nurture Faith! And Serve All!**  
Go in Peace. Prepare the Way of the Lord!  
**Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

## **WORSHIP NOTES:**

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**PRAYERS:** Please hold the following people in prayer for healing and new life:

Luther Park - Its staff, residents, families, and our management Company, Ecumen as they seek to care for one another and stay apart and wait for the pandemic to wane. Thankful for the recovery of residents and staff, who contracted Covid-19. As of Dec. 2nd, only two residents continue with active cases of the illness.

Our Country - In the midst of division and ongoing uncertainty about our future.

Our People and those connected to us: Pastor Steve Neuder and family, Chris Ingham; Michael Cressina; Randy Petersen; Nicky Schripsema; Wendi Lies; Gerda Burke; Debbie Haberlock; Kara Schripsema; Kai Haberlock; Tom Taylor; Hunter Taylor; Eugene Kurwicki; Mike Shobe; Sylvia Greenwood; Janet Merrill; Sonya Nordgaarden;; Jill Camp; Marguerite Suttmeier, Doris Hansen,

Our Congregation - As we seek leaders to serve on our 2021 Council, Estimate a Budget for 2021, tend to Luther Park, enter into Advent and the preparations for Christ's Birth, and prepare for the coming of Christ into our lives. Please pray for Susie Olson and Colleen Culwell as they adjust to joining into supporting the ministry we share. We give thanks for the organization they will bring to our office and finances.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ◆ **Giving Tree:** The list of names and gifts is part of last week's weekly newsletter. It can be accessed on our webpage under the **about:Newsletter** menu. Contact Tiffany Wright 208-290-8175 or tftwright08@gmail.com with questions or to receive the list of people still needing to be selected. Wrapped gifts need to be returned by Sunday, Dec. 13th.
- ◆ **New Office Assistant & Bookkeeper:** Meet Susie Olson and Colleen Culwell. A full bio will come out in the monthly newsletter. We are working on office hours and introducing Susie to the building and her role with the church. Thankful she was still available and excited about supporting the ministries we share. Much appreciation for Sharon Roget who filled in the gaps this month and has been showing Susie the ropes this week. Sharon has also welcomed and coordinated with our new Bookkeeper, Colleen Culwell. Many of you know Colleen, because she is also our accompanist on the 2nd & 4th Sundays and took over the early service after we lost Bud Smith. Please welcome both and continue being patient and gracious with us as we transition into this new way of doing things. Also, thank you to the Church Council, especially Jim Carlson, who led the way in developing, recruiting, and filling these positions.
- ◆ **Zoom Fellowship:** An invite will be emailed when the online service for Sunday is ready. Please set aside time after or before your worship on Sunday to join other members of FLC for fellowship at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom.
- ◆ See the weekly newsletter for other news and possibilities for this Advent Season.