



FOURTH SUNDAY
OF
Advent

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

4672 N Cedar Ave. Fresno, CA 93726

Rev. Michael N. Vernava

Rev. Khai N. Lee

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 24, 2023

The Mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to honor our Lord Jesus Christ through worship and ministering to all God's people equipping them for service to God and to each other.

CREATIVE WORSHIP

As We Gather: Calling A Faithful Pastor

O Gracious Father, You led Your holy apostles to ordain ministers for the proclamation of Your Word and the Faithful administration of the Sacraments of Christ. Grant to this congregation the guidance of the Holy Spirit to choose a suitable pastor according to Your will for the blessing of Your Church in this place; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRELUDE

Organist

CALL TO WORSHIP

*"Gesu Bambino" – Pietro Yon
Violin/Piano Duet*

OPENING HYMN

"Stir-up, O Lord, Stir-up Your Pow'r" Tune: LSB 399

Stir-up, O Lord, stir-up Your pow'r
And come to us this day, this hour,
This moment, come, O Lord, we pray,
Oh, come, Lord Jesus. Come and stay.

Remove the hindrance of our sin.
Make all Your people clean within
That we may gladly celebrate

Your joyous birth, so good and great.

Stir-up Your pow'r, our hearts prepare
To meet and greet You. Hear our prayer.
As Advent's light burns brighter still,
Help us to hear and do Your will.

△ Stir-up in us such happy hearts
And humble, as Your grace imparts,
To serve You, Lord, the Father, Son,
And Spirit, Three yet ever One.
Amen.

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 37:7a, 34a; Isaiah 30:18*

P Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him.

C Wait for the LORD and keep His way.

P The LORD waits to be gracious to you.

C He exalts Himself to show mercy to you.

P For the LORD is a God of justice;

C blessed are all those who wait for Him.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P So that we may experience the peace of sins forgiven,
let us come before our Lord with humble hearts as we
confess together:

**C Gracious Father, we all have sinned and fallen short of
Your glory. By what we have done and by what we**

**have failed to do, we have broken Your commands and
have not accomplished Your plans for our lives.**

P Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace, You alone give us the redemption and
the restoration, the absolution and the ability to follow
Your Word. Through the work of Jesus, the Word made
flesh, do for us what is impossible apart from You.

**C Forgive us, renew us, and lead us so that we may
follow Your plan for our lives and walk in Your ways to
the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P In the mercy of our gracious Father, Jesus came into this
world, journeying from the crib to the cross, from the
tomb and to His throne of glory in order to secure our
forgiveness according to God's plan of salvation.

Receive His assurance of pardon this day as we
celebrate Jesus' coming to save us. As a called and
ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive
you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠
Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

PSALM

89:1–5, 19–29

P I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever;
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to
all generations.

**C For I said, "Steadfast love will be built up forever;
in the heavens you will establish your faithfulness."**

P You have said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen
one; I have sworn to David my servant:

**C 'I will establish your offspring forever,
and build your throne for all generations.'"**

P Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD,
your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!

**C Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly one, and
said: "I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.**

P I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,
**C so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.**

P The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.
**C I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.**

P My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.
**C I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.**

P He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'
**C And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.**

P My steadfast love I will keep for him forever,
and my covenant will stand firm for him.
**C I will establish his offspring forever
and his throne as the days of the heavens.
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.**

KYRIE

L In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

L For the peace from above and for our salvation.
Let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

L For the peace of the whole world, for the well being of
the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to
the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

L For this holy house and for all who offer here their
worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

L Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C Amen.

COLLECT

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by
Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be
quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and
reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now
and forever.

C Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT

2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16

¹Now when the king lived in his house and
the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding
enemies, ²the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I
dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a
tent." ³And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your
heart, for the LORD is with you."

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to
Nathan, ⁵"Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD:

Would you build me a house to dwell in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. ⁷In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”” ⁸Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. . . .

¹⁶And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

Romans 16:25–27

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations,

according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“When Will the Little King Come” – Ruth Elaine Schram

Jane Parsons, Soprano Mac McIntosh, Tenor

Laura Shaghoian, Accompanist

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 1:26–38

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

³⁵And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will

overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

MESSAGE HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” LSB 357 (v. 1-4)

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

Refrain

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

- 2 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. *Refrain*
- 3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai’s height
In ancient times didst give the Law
In cloud and majesty and awe. *Refrain*
- 4 O come, Thou Branch of Jesse’s tree,
Free them from Satan’s tyranny

That trust Thy mighty pow’r to save,
And give them vict’ry o’er the grave. *Refrain*

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.
Text: Public domain

MESSAGE

“Rejoice!”

St. Luke 1:26-38

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.

OFFERTORY *Extended Doxology (Tune: LSB 500)*

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
O Three in One and One in Three,
Be praise now and eternally.
Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Following the prayers, the people may greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, "Peace be with you," as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matt. 5:22–24; Eph. 4:1–3).

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.

HYMN

"O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide" LSB 355 (Tune: LSB 358)

1 O Savior, rend the heavens wide;
Come down, come down with mighty stride;

Unlock the gates, the doors break down;
Unbar the way to heaven's crown.

- 2 O Father, light from heaven send;
As morning dew, O Son, descend.
Drop down, you clouds, the life of spring:
To Jacob's line rain down the King.
- 3 O earth, in flow'ring bud be seen;
Clothe hill and dale in garb of green.
Bring forth, O earth, a blossom rare,
Our Savior, sprung from meadow fair.
- 4 O Fount of hope, how long, how long?
When will You come with comfort strong?
O come, O come, Your throne forego;
Console us in our vale of woe.
- 5 O Morning Star, O radiant Sun,
When will our hearts behold Your dawn?
O Sun, arise; without Your light
We grope in gloom and dark of night.
- 6 Sin's dreadful doom upon us lies;
Grim death looms fierce before our eyes.
O come, lead us with mighty hand
From exile to our promised land.
- 7 There shall we all our praises bring
And sing to You, our Savior King;
There shall we laud You and adore
Forever and forevermore.

Text: Friedrich von Spee, 1591–1635; tr. Martin L. Seltz, 1909–67, alt.
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CLOSING PRAYER

P Lord God our Father, You kept Abraham and Sarah in safety throughout the days of their pilgrimage, You led the children of Israel through the midst of the sea, and by a star You led the Wise Men to the infant Jesus. Protect and guide us now in this time as we set out to travel. Make our ways safe and our homecomings joyful, and bring us at last to our heavenly home, where You dwell in glory with Your Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

BENEDICTION

P 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.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” LSB 357 (v. 5-7, 1)

5 O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav’nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. *Refrain*

Refrain

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

6 O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain*

7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace. *Refrain*

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE

Organist