

MESSIAS

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday in Advent

ENTERING GOD'S PRESENCE

During the Prelude, you are invited to meditate on the Psalm of the day as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

Welcome and Gathering Prayer

Rev. Mark W. van Stee

Prelude

Prelude in A Major BWV 536
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Ruth Pfister, Organ

Psalm of the Day -- Psalm 85:8-13

I will listen to what God the Lord says;
he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants—
but let them not turn to folly.

Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,
and righteousness looks down from heaven.
The Lord will indeed give what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest.
Righteousness goes before him
and prepares the way for his steps.

Introit

Procession from "A Ceremony of Carols" (1943)
Music: Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

IPC Singers

Call to Worship – Advent Candle Lighting

Garcia Youakim Family

Leader: According to tradition, the fourth candle in the Advent wreath represents love. Love is the reason Christmas happens at all. It is because of God's great love that he sent Jesus in the world as the best gift we could ever receive. When our Christmas gifts are all distributed, and the decorations taken down, He will still be there offering to give us hope, peace, joy, and love.

But after [Joseph] had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”--which means, “God with us.” (Matthew 1:20-23)

Leader: (*prayer*): Let us pray: Dear Father of peace and love, thank you for loving us enough to send your Son our Savior, Jesus Christ, into the world. We pray that you will help us to grow in our love for you and to tell those around us about your amazing love. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

***Hymn of Praise #56 “The First Nowell”**

Prayer of Confession

Rev. Mark W. van Stee

Leader: Gracious God, we acknowledge today that too often we have responded to your love with indifference; to your commands with defiance; to your forgiveness with ungratefulness.

People: In this season of Advent, come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive you with joy, as the shepherds; with gratitude, as Simeon; with obedience, as Mary; with love, as you have loved us. Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

“Savior of the Nations, Come” (*see next page*)

Savior of the Nations, Come



1. Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, show your - self, the vir - gin's son.
2. Not by hu - man power or seed did the wom - an's womb con-ceive;
3. Praise to you, O Lord, we sing. Praise to Christ, our new-born King



Fill with won - der, all the earth that the Lord chose such a birth.
on - ly by the Spir - it's breath was the Word of God made flesh.
With the Fa - ther, Spir - it, one, let your last - ing king - dom come.



Ambrose of Milan, 340–397
Tr. Martin Luther, 1524
Tr. William M. Reynolds, 1860; alt.

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND 7.7.7.7.
Adapted from *Geistliches Gesangbüchlein*, Wittenberg, 1524

God's Gracious Will for Our Lives – Romans 6:11-14

Leader: In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.

People: For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

***Gloria Patri #579** “Glory Be to the Father”

RECEIVING THE WORD OF GOD

Children's Message

Rev. Mark W. van Stee

Old Testament Reading

Numbers 20:1-13 (p. 157)

Lydia Meister

Meditation

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

IPC Singers

Text: German Carol, 15th C.; Trans. Theodore Baker (1851-1934)

Music: *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*

arr. Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

New Testament Reading

Mark 12:35-37 (p. 1018)

Sermon

“Jesus, the Perfect and Only Messiah”

Rev. Mark W. van Stee

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

***Hymn of Response #40** “Joy to the World”

Prayer of Dedication of Tithes & Offerings

Dennis Kuriakose, Elder for
Personnel, Property & Planning

Offertory

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

IPC Singers

Text: Christina Rossetti (ca. 1872)

Music: Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934)

***Doxology #592** “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Prayers of the People

Dennis Kuriakose

The Lord’s Prayer (*in unison in English or the language of your choice*)

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. Amen.

GOING WITH GOD’S MISSION AND BLESSING

Welcoming Guests & Announcements

Dennis Kuriakose

Moment for Mission

Jeff Anhut

***Hymn of Dedication #23** “Angels we Have Heard on High”

***Sending and Benediction**

Rev. Mark W. van Stee

Choral Benediction

“May the Grace of the Lord”

Music: Ken Barker

IPC Singers

Postlude

Prelude in G Major BWV 568

Johann Sebastian Bach

Ruth Pfister, Organ

Please remain quietly seated during the postlude. If you need to leave, please do so quietly.

****Please stand if you are able.***

Today’s bulletin cover features the word “Messiah” in its German translation.