

Sunday, December 9, 2018

Second Sunday of Advent



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342

Phone: 320-684-2123 (1-877-684-2123) Fax: 320-684-2836

E-mail address: blcmalmo@frontiernet.net

Church Web Site: blcmalmo.org

Pastor James Muske

320-583-5796

Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN 320-839-8193

Kathy Berland RN ANP 218-838-6181

Prayer Chain Contacts: Char Berg 320-684-2102 or Darlene Christensen 320-839-8193

Church Secretary: Mary Braun & Jenny Schuett

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will LIVE and SERVE through FAITH

we will ACT with LOVE and KINDNESS

we will GIVE hope and SUPPORT to all.

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.

Please notify usher if you would like assistance

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INTRODUCTION

Today's reading tells of Esther's struggle with identity and risk which raises critical questions for Christians today, including: How do we maintain our witness of faith in a culture dominated by material consumption and political brinksmanship? What kind of risks are we willing to take on behalf of those vulnerable and threatened? Our congregations, our denominations, need people like Esther who will step into hard places of fear to speak a word of life.

(to the tune of)

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Perhaps You Have Been Chosen" #805 ELW

"Perhaps you have been chosen for such a time as this!"
So Mordecai told Esther to serve as she'd been blessed.
Their people were in danger and needed someone brave —
A queen who knew her calling to risk and act and save.

She stood up for her people and dared approach the king
Although he might have killed her for doing such a thing.
Inviting him to dinner — a feast to satisfy —
She asked of him a favor: "Don't let my people die!"

The king gave what she wanted and let her people live,
And all because Queen Esther used what she had to give.
She faced her fear with courage, she changed the things she could,
She chose to make a difference — to use her life for good.

O God, we look around us and see a world in need.
There's violence and injustice, there's prejudice and greed.
Remind us of our calling to bravely use our gifts.
Perhaps we have been chosen for such a time as this.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: "Go Tell It on the Mountain" #290 ELW

Please rise on the last verse

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free, the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy, the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace. **Amen.**

Let us come before God in confession.

Silence is kept for reflection.

To you, O God, we lift up our souls. You know us through and through; we confess our sins to you. Remember not our sins; remember us with your steadfast love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen

Children of God, come with joy and draw water from the well of salvation.

Remember the gift of baptism: your sin is washed away in the name of ✠ Jesus; you belong to Christ; you are anointed to serve. Stand up and raise your heads!

The reign of God is near. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God of justice,

you sent your servant Esther into a life of privilege so that those without would be taken care of. In our privilege, show us how to advocate for those who have less, so that your world might be peaceful and just. We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Please be seated

PRAISE TEAM ANTHEM: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

SCRIPTURE ACCLAMATION: “Thy Word”

FIRST READING: Esther 4:1-17

¹When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went through the city, wailing with a loud and bitter cry; ²he went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. ³In every province, wherever the king's command and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and most of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴When Esther's maids and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed; she sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth; but he would not accept them. ⁵Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what was happening and why. ⁶Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, ⁷and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. ⁸Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for

their destruction, that he might show it to Esther, explain it to her, and charge her to go to the king to make supplication to him and entreat him for her people.

⁹Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. ¹⁰Then Esther spoke to Hathach and gave him a message for Mordecai, saying, ¹¹All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law — all alike are to be put to death. Only if the king holds out the golden scepter to someone, may that person live. I myself have not been called to come in to the king for thirty days. ¹²When they told Mordecai what Esther had said, ¹³Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. ¹⁴For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this." ¹⁵Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, ¹⁶Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish. ¹⁷Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Please stand for the Gospel

GOSPEL Matthew 5:13-16

Glory to you, O Lord

¹³"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Please be seated

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Little Drummer Boy"

4 3. Mary nodded, pa rum pa pum pum
The ox and lamb kept time,

1. Come they told me, pa rum pa pum pum
Our newborn King to see, pa rum pa pum pum
Our finest gifts we bring, pa rum pa pum pum
To lay before the King, pa rum pa pum pum
Rum pa pump um, rum pa pum pum
So to honor Him, pa rum pa pa pum pum,
When we come.

2. Baby Jesu, pa rum pa pum pum
I am a poor boy too, pa rum pa pum pum
I have no gift to bring, pa rum pa pum pum
Not fit to give a King, pa rum pa pum pum
Rum pa pum pum, rum pa pum pum
Shall I play for You, pa rum pa pum pum
On my drum?

Please Stand

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Prepare your church to share the good news, life-giving God. Put your word within us and dwell among us. Send us out to proclaim the mercy and salvation that abides in you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Protect the creation, life-giving God. Sustain the mountains and hills. Restore the rivers. Give us wisdom and compassion to care for wilderness areas and urban ecosystems. Move us to care for your creation in all its forms and richness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Purify the hearts of all people, life-giving God. Remove the hate that lives within us and among us. Mold us into peacemakers. Raise up leaders rooted in your love and fed by your word. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comfort all who hurt, life-giving God. Wrap them in your tender care. Remember the forgotten and send us out to share your love with them. Be with the wandering, the worried, and the woeful (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bless this congregation, life-giving God. Give strength and joy to worship leaders, musicians, and our altar guild as they prepare the way for the celebration of the Christ child's coming among us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We remember the generations who have shown us your faithfulness, life-giving God. Shine your light on those who mourn and prepare us for that day when we will see you face-to-face. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Please be seated

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Silent Night”

#281 ELW

Ushers will begin passing the offering plate.

Please rise as the ushers bring the offering to the altar.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of abundance,

we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD’S PRAYER – LED BY THE PRAISE TEAM

Invitation to Communion

God fills the hungry with good things. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

All are welcome. (Communion by intinction - red wine; white apple juice)

COMMUNION SONG: Mary Did You Know?

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy One, we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, harvesters of justice and righteousness, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

BLESSING

May God direct your ways in peace, make you abound in love for one another and for all, and strengthen your hearts until the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN:

“Joy to the World”

#267 ELW

**Visitors! It has been great having you join us for worship!
Please come again.**

THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK

Music: The Praise Team

Greeters: Wally & Bev Swenson

Ushers: 8:30 – Judy Wozney, Diane Sandberg 10:00 – Darrel Kelly

Hospitality Hosts: Jack & Paula Spetz

Thank you for your service!

Response to God’s Word Last Week

Attendance: Sunday, December 2, 2018: 8:30am 62 10:00am 24

THIS WEEK AT Bethesda

Dec. 10 through Dec. 16, 2018

Monday	12/10	9:00 am	Women’s Devotion at Pat Becker’s
		1:00 pm	Stewardship Meeting
		1:00 pm	Double Deck Pinochle
		7:00 pm	AA/Alanon
Tuesday	12/11		No Quilters
		12 – 2 pm	Pastor’s Text Study
Wednesday	12/12	9:00 am	Bible Study
		10:00 am	Stitchers
		5:30 pm	Choir Practice
		7:00 pm	Praise Team
Thursday	12/13	8:00 am	ROMEOS
		12:30 pm	Funtimers
		1:00 pm	Council Meeting
Friday	12/14	10:00 am	Bone Builders
Sunday	12/16	8:30 am	Worship
		10:00 am	Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ATTENDANCE REGISTRY *Please* sign and pass the attendance registry which you will find in the pew. This information is gathered for annual reports to the Synod.

BLESSING BOX We received \$160.62 in the Blessing Box last Sunday. Donations will go to Local Benevolence. Thank you! What a Blessing!

WOMEN'S DEVOTIONS will be on Monday, December 10th, 9:00-11:00 am at Pat Becker's house. Please come join us; we are an informal group of women who seek to learn more about God and what He is saying to us through the study of His word. The study is facilitated by Pat Becker.

2018 OPERATION CHRISTMAS the giving tree is up in the Narthex and ready for donations of hats, mittens, scarves etc. for distribution to local area children whom might not otherwise get a gift this year. Please have all donations here by December 9th as the items will be delivered on December 10th.

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH PROGRAMS 1. Purchase gifts from ELCA's Giving Program or from Heifer International. It is an opportunity to honor a loved one by purchasing livestock needed in poor countries. The information will be available in the fellowship hall during the holiday season. **AND 2.** We need names of local families that could use food or gas gift cards during the holiday season. The suggestion box will be in the Narthex. Please complete the suggestion form if you know someone who could use help this Holiday Season. Names will be taken until December 19th, 2018.

RIDE TO ST. CLOUD Judy Wuorio needs a ride to St. Cloud on Friday, December 28th for an eye doctor appointment. If anyone is available, please contact Judy.

NEWSLETTER CALENDAR UPDATE Greeters for Christmas Day will be George & Kathy Larson

CENTENNIAL ACTIVITIES in 2019 Each month you have the opportunity to win a fabulous prize by purchasing a \$1 chance, while also decorating the fellowship hall. All funds raised will be used for our Centennial Celebration on August 11, 2019. Watch the bulletin and Newsletter for more details. If you are a snow bird, mail your money or prepay to participate for each month you are gone. You don't want to miss out on the fun and prizes!

THANK YOU! Doris Reinhard would like to thank all the people who helped celebrate her 95th birthday by sending cards and visiting her in the hospital.