

Sunday, December 22, 2019

Fourth Sunday of Advent



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

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Pastor James Muske

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Church Secretary: Mary Braun

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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Zechariah's Song

INTRODUCTION

Forgiveness; compassion; mercy; peace. These are not states of being, but actions. We show faithfulness to God, through the Holy Spirit, when we live out these actions in our daily lives, and form communities characterized by them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: **“Blessed be the God of Israel”** **#250 ELW**
(Please Stand 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 parent who rouses us from slumber, the shepherd who gathers us on the holy mountain, the deliverer who sets us free.
Amen.

Let us come before the living God in confession.

Silence is kept for reflection.

As we wait and watch for the promised day of salvation,
we open our hearts to you, O God. Search us and know us. Reveal all that we keep inside. To you, O God, we confess our sins, known and unknown. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us in your ways of justice and peace. Make us reflections of the radiant love of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Beloved children of the Most High, you are gathered before the righteous judge who has mercy on all. Splash exuberantly in the waters of baptism, where sin is washed away in the river of life. Dwell peacefully in the loving arms of the one who nurtures all creation. Go forth boldly in the assurance that your sins are forgiven in the name of the one who is coming and is already here, † Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of the prophets,
you sent John into the world to proclaim the coming of your son. Give us ears to hear the proclamations of your promises and eyes to see your presence in this world.

Amen

Please be seated

CHOIR ANTHEM: "Just One Star"

PSALM Psalm 113

¹Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD; praise the name of the LORD.

²**Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time on and forevermore.**

³From the rising of the sun to its setting the name of the LORD is to be praised.

⁴**The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.**

⁵Who is like the LORD our God, who is seated on high,

⁶**who looks far down on the heavens and the earth?**

⁷He raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap,

⁸**to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people.**

⁹He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children.

Praise the LORD!

Please Stand for the Gospel

GOSPEL

Luke 1:5-13 [14-25], 57-80

Glory to you, O Lord

⁵In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. ⁷But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

⁸Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. ¹⁰Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ¹⁸Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." ¹⁹The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good

news. ²⁰But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur."

²¹Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. ²²When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, ²⁵This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.

⁵⁷Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." ⁶¹They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." ⁶²Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. ⁶³He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. ⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: ⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. ⁶⁹He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, ⁷⁰as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷²Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, ⁷³the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, ⁷⁷to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, ⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁸⁰The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You, O Christ

Please be seated

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming" #272 ELW

Please stand if able

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Keeping awake as we watch for Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Hear your church, O God, as we pray for all who belong to Jesus Christ. Where the church is scorned, preserve it; where the church is privileged, grant it humility. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Hear your earth, O God, as we pray for its healing and care. Protect the grapevine and the mighty cedar, the mountains and seas and all that is in them. Give life, that all life may call on your name. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Hear the nations, O God, as we pray for those who hold power and authority over people and lands. Help those who create and uphold good laws and those working to reform what is unjust, that the world might better reflect your grace. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Hear those in need, O God, as we pray for all who face uncertainty: refugees and

immigrants, those who are imprisoned, and those without work, housing, food, or health care. Bring good news to all in need of hope. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Hear this community of faith, O God, as we pray for families and friends who gather in this season, for travelers and hosts, and for those who will work or serve others this Christmas. Let the peace of Emmanuel, God-with-us, shine in every heart. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Hear all who mourn, O God, as we remember the lives of our beloved dead. Encourage the living to learn from our ancestors in faith as we follow your call. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You hear the cries of our hearts, O Lord. Fill us with hopeful expectation, that in each day and hour we may love and serve our neighbors, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated

OFFERING *Ushers will begin passing the offering plate and Blessing Box.
Please stand as the ushers bring the offering to the altar.*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Giver of every good thing,
we set before you the gifts that you have already given to sustain our lives and to share with others. Help us to be good stewards of the earth and all that is in it, and let our lives be a testimony to the abundant feast you prepare for all who hunger. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Invitation to Communion

Come now with joy to Emmanuel's table. Feast at the banquet of hope and love.
(Communion by intinction – red wine; white apple juice; gluten free available)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of abundance, we give you thanks that in this holy meal you have invited us to feast with you and one another. May the taste of your love

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER & CARE LIST: Winnie Zahradka, and Coy, grandson of Jim & Vicki Magedanz, Teresa Berry.

POINSETTIAS We are still accepting donations towards our beautiful Poinsettia tree. See Dianne Jones if you still want to purchase or donate a Poinsettia.

JOIN IN THE FUN! Support our fund-raising activities in 2019-2020. Our raffle item for December will be provided by ROMEOS. Purchase a \$1 raffle ticket to win. The winner will be drawn the last Sunday of the month during Fellowship hour between services.

THANK YOU for the cards and prayers following my recent surgery. God Bless you all – Jenny Schuett.

HYMN FEST John Kozial, Jr. will be joining us on Sunday, December 29th to perform a “Hymn Sing” for our Sunday service at 9:00am. If you joined us last year, you won’t want to miss it this year.

NEED A GIFT IDEA? Check out the display in the fellowship hall and consider ordering farm animals and other items from the ELCA or Heifer International Giving Programs to donate to those less fortunate than us.

CONGREGATIONAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING will be held today after the service to answer any additional questions or concerns you may have on the Multi-Media Expansion update included in the December Newsletter.

MILLE LACS HOMEMAKERS If you're looking for fun, fellowship and an opportunity to make a difference in our community, please consider joining. Beginning in September the club regularly meets the second Wednesday of the month from fall to spring. Much of the club's focus is on donations to area nursing homes, but we also support many community organizations. Please contact Shirley Gosselin at 320-676-8356 for more information.

MONTHLY TITHING With the loss of one service this month due to bad weather, our donations are down. We have direct deposit applications in the office. You can sign up indefinitely or sign up for a few months if you’re going south for the winter.

OFFERING ENVELOPES for 2020 are here! Please pick up your envelopes from the table in the Narthex.

Come let us
Adore
Him



Christmas Worship Schedule

**Tuesday, Dec. 24th Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
3:30pm&5:00 pm**

**Wednesday, Dec. 25th Christmas Day Service 10:00 am
with Christmas Potluck following the service (ham has
been donated). All are welcome!**