

SAINT MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

318 Chester Avenue • Moorestown, NJ 08057-2526

Rev. Dr. Eric J. Trozzo, Pastor



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 6, 2020 9:30AM

PRELUDE

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry ELW 249

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the + Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. (silence for self-reflection)

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

ABSOLUTION

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE

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LIGHTING OF WREATH

In Advent, we look for Christ to come in fullness, so that all may know the peace, goodness and justice of Christ's love in the world. In the lighting of the flame we look to Christ in hope.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

CHILDREN'S TIME

FIRST READING ISAIAH 40:1-11

1 Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. 3 A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5 Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." 6 A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. 9 Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" 10 See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Response after the conclusion: The word of the Lord.

PSALM PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13

1 You have been gracious to your | land, O Lord; you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob. 2 You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people and blotted out | all their sins. 8 I will listen to what the Lord | God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their | hearts to you. 9 Truly, your salvation is very near to | those who fear you, that your glory may dwell | in our land. R 10 Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together; righteousness and peace have | kissed each other. 11 Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth, and righteousness shall look | down from heaven. 12 The Lord will indeed | grant prosperity, and our land will | yield its increase. 13 Righteousness shall go be- | fore the Lord and shall prepare for | God a pathway. R

SECOND READING 2 PETER 3:8-15A

8 Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. 11 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? 13 But, in accordance with his promise, we wait



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for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. 14Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; 15and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Response after the conclusion: The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ALL EARTH IS HOPEFUL (ELW 266)

GOSPEL MARK 1:1-8

1The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’ “ 4John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Response after the conclusion: The gospel of the Lord.

SERMON

THE REV. DR. ERIC J. TROZZO

HYMN OF THE DAY

Comfort, Comfort Now My People ELW 256

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 into hell.
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



Response: Your mercy is great.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us into the world to serve our neighbor.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



POSTLUDE

Prepare the Royal Highway ELW 264

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OF ADVENT

taking
faith
home

God has good news for all people.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 1:1-8	The beginning of the good news
Monday	Isaiah 40:1-11	Comfort my people
Tuesday	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Promise of the Lord's coming
Wednesday	Malachi 4:1-6	The great day of the Lord
Thursday	Matthew 3:1-10	The preaching of John the Baptist
Friday	1 Timothy 1:12-17	Gratitude for God's mercy
Saturday	Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13	A prayer for God's peace
Sunday	John 1:6-8, 19-28	John's witness to the light

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"[T]he voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Mark 1:3 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Eternal God, we thank you that through your Son, Jesus Christ, love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Amen. (Psalm 85:10)

Mealtime Prayer:

Generous God, may this gift of food strengthen us to walk in your way of comfort, hope, and peace through the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord God feed you like a shepherd and keep you safe. (Isaiah 40:11)

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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*There's a Voice in the
Wilderness*

taking
faith
home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is some good news you have heard recently?
- What events in the news do people consider to be positive news or good news?
- The word gospel means good news. How is the coming of Christ into our world good news for you?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 1:1-8.

The beginning of a book helps set up what the book is about and where the story is going. This is true of the Gospel of Mark as well. Mark 1:1-8 is part of Mark's prologue (vv. 1-13) and was used in ancient writings with this very purpose in mind: to give information that helps people follow the story as it unfolds. Mark's point is that good news ("good tidings" in Isaiah 40:9), the gospel, is beginning to happen through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This good news is linked to John the baptizer who is himself reminiscent of Elijah. When Elijah comes again, God's people will encounter God's promised deliverance (Malachi 4:5). That future time is now present through John and through Jesus. John's message of repentance (v. 4) will be continued by Jesus when he says, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:14). Where do you see the good news of Jesus happening today?

Pray: **Merciful God, we thank you for fulfilling your promise of hope and peace through the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

SERVICE

Good news has a positive effect on people. Isaiah 40 gives prophetic comfort to God's people. What word of comfort or encouragement can you give to someone this week?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Set up a Christmas nativity set in your home. Place the wise men further away from the set for now. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope and the second one of peace. Pause for a moment to sit in silence and look upon the nativity set and think about the coming of Jesus.

Say this Bible verse: Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people. (Psalm 85:8a)

Pray: Lord, help us to prepare the way of the Lord. Give us peace and hope. Amen.