


The Fourth Sunday of Advent December 24, 2023

[View Announcements](#) 

Hymns are found in the blue *Hymnal 1982* in your pew.
The 'S' numbers are located at the front of the hymnal.

The service begins in quiet and prayer.

Prelude: *Variations on "Veni Emmanuel"* Deborah Friauff (b. 1962)

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn 56: *O come, o come Emmanuel*

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

People **Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you 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 Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Kyrie: Hymn S-96: *Lord, have mercy*

Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray. Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The First Lesson: *2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16*

When the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you."

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I 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 and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now 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 to be prince over my people Israel; and 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. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from 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. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn 438: *Tell out, my soul* 10:00 am only

Canticle 15 8:00 am only

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Second Lesson: *Romans 16:25-27*

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-- to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn 258: *Virgin Born, we bow before Thee*

Reader The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

The Gospel: *Luke 1:26-38*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He 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 ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for all people according to their needs. *A brief silence* We pray that we will hear your call to us, O God, and have the courage to say yes, as did your servant Mary. Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what you would have us do and equip us with the courage to do it.

People **God of love, hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, be with us as we prepare our hearts, souls, and minds for the birth of your son. Make our homes havens of blessing and peace for family and friends; and may those of us who live alone enjoy the solitude and find fulfillment in loving you and our neighbors. **God of love, hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who will travel over Christmas. Protect them from every danger and bring them in safety to their journey's end. We pray for those who will spend this Christmas separated from family and friends, including the men and women in the Armed Forces. **God of love, hear our prayer.**

God of peace, may your healing Spirit descend upon the Middle East, Ukraine, and all places torn apart by violence and conflict. Comfort those who mourn and those who have been harmed by brutality. Stand with those who are fearful. Protect refugees and humanitarian relief efforts. Inspire and uphold those who work for a just and durable peace. **God of love, hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who suffer from any grief or trouble, including those on our prayer list and all whose struggles are known to you alone. *Pause* We pray for those who are hungry, cold, and without a home. We pray for those who are out of work. We pray for families that experience stress over the holidays, for those who will spend this first Christmas without a loved one, and for all who find the holidays painful. **God of love, hear our prayer.**

In a moment of silence, let us pray for those who are dear to us. *Silence* Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours; grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us. **God of love, hear our prayer.**

We offer our thanks and praises for those who have died, and all who are dear to each of us. *Silence* Let light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace. **God of love, hear our prayer.**

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours and dedicated to your service. Work through us to bring about your kingdom in your good time and in your good way. **Amen.**

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor. *Silence*
Most merciful God, we confess that 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. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Celebrant Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Offertory Voluntary: *Basque Carol* arr. Paul Manz (1919-2009)

Presentation Hymn 265: *The Angel Gabriel*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING Eucharistic Prayer B

Celebrant The Lord be with you. *People* And al - so with you.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts. *People* We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The Celebrant offers our thanks to God for the grace and mercy made available to us in Christ.

Sanctus: Hymn S-130: *Holy, holy, holy Lord*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

The people stand or kneel as the Celebrant gives thanks for the reconciling work of Christ through his passion and resurrection and prays over the bread and wine.

Celebrant Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

People **We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection,
 We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues with the Eucharistic prayer.

Celebrant By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit of all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever.

People A-men.

Celebrant As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Fraction Anthem: Hymn S-152: *Christ our Passover*

Al - le - lu - ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;
 There - fore let us keep the feast. Al - le - lu - ia.

Please come forward and stand or kneel at the rail. The priest will place the bread in your outstretched palm (Consecrated rice wafers are available for those with wheat allergies - simply ask the priest). You may dip (intinct) the wafer in the wine in the small cup held by the Eucharistic minister. Alternatively, you may indicate your desire to drink from the common chalice by consuming the bread and remaining at the rail after the Eucharistic minister passes; another Eucharistic minister will bring the large chalice over for you to drink from directly. Please know that Christ is fully present in both the bread and the wine - there is no requirement to receive both. If you do not wish to receive communion, you may come forward, cross your hands over your chest, and receive a blessing.

Communion Voluntary: *Lo, How a Rose is Growing* arr. Michael Burkhardt (b.1957)

Communion Hymn 81: *Lo, how a Rose*

When Lay Eucharistic Visitors are taking Holy Communion to those unable to be with us in person, we say the following

Celebrant In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

People **We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup.**

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

Celebrant Let us pray.

People **Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Blessing

Closing Hymn 80: *From heaven above to Earth I come*

The young people are invited to come forward during the hymn to participate in the dismissal.

Young people Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude: *Chorale Prelude on "Von Himmel hoch, da komm ich her"* Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)