



2nd Sunday of Advent

Immanuel Lutheran Church ELCA

Forest City, Iowa

Pastors Rod Hopp & Zech Anderson, Intern Elizabeth Carr

December 3, 2023 9:15am

www.immanuelfamily.com

Building community in the name and likeness of Jesus Christ.

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Call to Advent"

Choir

L: We gather today. **C: It is time to worship!**

L: We listen for God **C: It is time to hear!**

L: We receive God's grace. **C: It is time to be loved!**

L: We leave in peace. **C: It is time to serve others!**

L: As we wait for Jesus' arrival, Emmanuel, God-with-us, is already here in this time and place.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Seth, Amy, Noah, Aaron Thorson

GATHERING HYMN: "**On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry**"

#249 ELW

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: People of God, when we think that we have nowhere left to turn, we can always turn to God. Whether we feel frozen or are rushing with no time to rest, whether it feels like life is happening to us too quickly or like our lives will never change, God is with us. For God, there is always time for forgiveness. We trust God, and we confess our sins together.

Brief pause

L: Holy One,

C: We have not stayed awake. We have missed you when you appeared in our neighbors, in strangers half a world away, in the suffering planet. We have wasted the time and the skills that you gave us and assumed we were powerless to mend the breaches in our world. Sometimes, we even gave up on your mercy, justice, and love. God, is it too late for us? Speak tenderly to our anxious hearts. Tear open the heavens and heal what we have done. Amen.

L: People of God,

God's judgment is certain, and God's forgiveness is lightning fast. Hear this good news: in the name of Jesus Christ, all your sins are forgiven. Forgiveness gives us the courage we need. Wherever we wait for God's time to come, we will witness wonders. **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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11 *Good news of God's coming to a people in exile*

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 [read responsively by whole verse]

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;

you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

²**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins.**

⁸I 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.**

¹⁰Steadfast 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.**

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a *Waiting for and hastening the day of God*

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8 *John appears from the wilderness*

*Announcement: **Glory to you, O Lord.***

*Conclusion: **Praise to you, O Christ.***

SERMON

Pastor Zech

HYMN OF THE DAY: **"Prepare the Royal Highway"**

#264

APOSTLES' CREED

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PRAYER OF THE CHURCH: *L: Hurry, God. C: Receive our prayers.*

Ruby Sue Albertsen

Chris McCormick

Lowell Solberg

Hazel Barloon

Jill (Lewison) Nedved

Jennie Spencer

Liam Bartleson

Connie Nyhus

Marie Thayer

Hayden Despenas

Mary Paulsen

Ernie Uetz

Parker Farland

Tim Schmidt

Missionary Karen Anderson

Joyce Kasper

Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Magallanes

SHARING OF THE PEACE: *L: The peace of Christ be with you always. C: And also with you.*

OFFERING: "Every Valley"

Choir

OFFERTORY: **“We are an Offering”**

#692

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God, for the time we have, we say: **Thank you.**

For the gifts we offer, we say: **Thank you.**

For the chance to help others, we say: **Thank you.**

For the people whose lives will be better because of these gifts, we say: **Thank you.**

For the ways you are changing the world, we say: **Thank you.**

We pray in the name of Jesus, who appears wherever people need our help. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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Holy, Holy, Holy

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

COMMUNION: **“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”**

#241

“O Day Full of Grace”

#627

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING & PRAYER

SENDING HYMN: **“All Earth Is Hopeful”**

#266

BLESSING

DISMISSAL: As you leave this place, remember whether you are waiting for a new beginning or just waiting for something to end, God is sustaining you. Keep alert; trust God; seek peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

† † † † † †

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Today's worship is broadcast at 11:00am over KLOW 107.3 FM. **Broadcast and altar flowers** are given in memory of Aaron Sr. & Connie Charlson from Aaron Jr., Rita, and Dirk Charlson.

Worship Participants:

Ushers: Jim Lund, Gary McCarthy, Tina Berg

Greeter: Shirley Rollefson

Assisting Minister: Patti Strukel

Sound/Video Techs: Bruce Mielke, Dave Midtgaard

Communion Set Up: Ruth Melby

Communion Servers: Melanie Westerberg, Harlan Rodberg

Altar Care: Mary Lund

Song Leaders: Steve Olmstead, Jaci Thorson

Scripture Reader: Steve Olmstead

Piano: Linda Ferjak, Riley Walton

Choir Director: Linda Ferjak