

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Sunday, December 6, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

4101 Washington Street NE

Columbia Heights, MN 55421

+ CONNECT +

OPENING HYMN: “Prepare the Royal Highway”

Prepare the royal highway; The King of kings is near!

Let ev’ry hill and valley A level road appear!

Then greet the King of Glory Foretold in sacred story:

REFRAIN: Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God’s Word!

God’s people, see Him coming: Your own eternal king!

Palm branches strew before Him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!

God’s promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you! REFRAIN:

Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!

Your king, yet ev’ry nation Its tribute too should bring.

All lands, bow down before Him! All nations, now adore Him! REFRAIN:

His is no earthly kingdom; It comes from heav’n above.

His rule is peace and freedom And justice, truth, and love.

So let your praise be sounding For kindness so abounding: REFRAIN:

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INVOCATION:

L: Our worship begins the way our lives in Christ begin in baptism: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION OF OUR SINS:

L: Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God! Recalling our baptism into Christ, we confess our sins to God in the full assurance of the gift of forgiveness by the mighty sacrifice of His Son.

C: December is upon us, Lord, and we are on the fast and busy road to Christmas. Time seems to get away from us and we get trapped in missing all that we can’t do this Christmas. Lord, we confess that it is easy to get involved in all these opportunities and stresses that come our way. Forgive us when we put our faith on a back burner and focus instead on pressures in our lives. Help us to take time to see your beam of direction which shines in our path, leading us to peace and hope. Clear our spirits of the frustrations and anxieties of this season, so that the Light which you are sending into the world will truly shine in and through us to others. These things we pray in the name of Jesus, our Hope and our Light, Amen.

FORGIVENESS IS ANNOUNCED

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE:

P: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world.

C: **The light no darkness can overcome.**

P: Let your light scatter the darkness

C: **And illumine your Church.**

P: Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors

C: **That the King of glory may come in. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

SONG: "We Light the Advent Candle"

We light the Advent candle And share the wondrous Word.

With love, we tell of Jesus Till all around have heard.

God's love is for each nation Throughout His whole creation.

We wait with growing light Till God makes all things right!

We light the Advent candle And thank the Lord for rest.

With peace, we know our Jesus Has come to be our guest.

This peace beyond all knowing Within our hearts is glowing.

We wait with growing light Till God makes all things right!

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PRAYER OF THE DAY:

L: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Let us pray.

C: **Lord, in the midst of our busy time, when we are in the rush to Christmas, you burst into our lives with the tantalizing promise of something new. Open our hearts and spirits to the glorious possibilities of hope and peace to come. Help us to prepare our lives to receive you. We thank you for all the blessings you pour on us and for the privilege we have in sharing these blessings with others. Be with us all this day and all these days that we may serve you better by sharing the love of Jesus with all who need it. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.**

+ NURTURE +

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Zechariah 9:9-16

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you. I will bend Judah as I bend my bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, Zion, against your sons, Greece, and make you like a warrior's sword. Then the LORD will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The Sovereign LORD will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south, and the LORD Almighty will shield them. They will destroy and overcome with slingstones. They will drink and roar as with wine; they will be full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar. The LORD their God will save his people on that day as a shepherd saves his flock. They will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

EPISTLE LESSON: 2 Peter 3:8-14

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

HOLY GOSPEL:

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, chapter one.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord!**

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"—"a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY: "On Jordan's Bank"

**On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.**

**We hail you as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward;
Without your grace we waste away Like flow'rs that wither and decay.**

**Stretch forth your hand, our health restore, And make us rise to fall no more;
Oh, let your face upon us shine And fill the world with love divine.**

**All praise to you, eternal Son, Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore, And Holy Spirit, evermore.**

MESSAGE: "What's New?" – Pastor Bill Hugo

CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his 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. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

+ EMPOWER +

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

(Prayer response – P: Lord, in your mercy, C: Hear our prayer.)

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: **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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN: “Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates” (st. 1, 2, 4)

Lift up your heads, you mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits.

The King of kings is drawing near, The Savior of the world is here.

He brings Salvation down to earth. Greet him with shouts of holy mirth.

Our highest praise we bring, our God, Creator, King.

The righteous King is bringing peace; He comes the pris’ners to release.

His royal crown, self sacrifice, Its jewel, mercy without price.

He brings our sorrows to an end. Shout out your joy to God, our friend.

Our highest praise we bring, our God, Redeemer, King.

Unbar the gate, fling wide the door, Your heart of God’s design restore.

Adorn its wall with all things right, with peace and love and joy and light.

Your King will then be glad to come and live within you as his home.

Our highest praise we bring, to God, our Lord, and King.

(“Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates”, text copyright 1982 Concordia Publishing House, used with permission, Lutheran Service Book Hymn License #100014518.)

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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

Lay Minister: Lisa Neaderhiser

Altar Guild: Pat & Duane Rosenberg