

Morning Worship

Bethesda Lutheran Church – 8:30 AM

Immanuel Lutheran Church – 11:00 AM

December 7, 2025

Second Sunday of Advent

Before we begin our worship this morning, I acknowledge that Bethesda Lutheran Church/Immanuel Lutheran Church stands on the traditional grounds of the Anishinaabe People, and we honor their elders both past and present. Their presence is imbued in the lands and waters surrounding us. We nurture our relationships with our indigenous neighbors, and the shared responsibilities to their homeland where we all reside today.

HOLY COMMUNION

Prelude

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God on the move,

we have every reason to hold onto hope.

**We have every reason to believe that spring will come,
that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise.**

**And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers.
With anxious hearts we cry out to you,
“Will change ever come? Will things ever get better?
Will I ever make a difference?”
Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is
shining.
Show us the places where you are on the move.
With open hearts we pray,
amen.**

Family of faith,
in our honesty,
we are heard.
In our worries,
we are held.
In our failings,
we are forgiven.
In our fear,
we are not alone.
Friends, this is the good news of the gospel!
When we're running out of hope,
God is still at work.
Thanks be to God!
Amen.

Gathering Hymn: ELW #249 “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

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.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Hymn of Praise #250 *“Blessed Be the God of Israel”*

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. **Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David’s royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

³ His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples;
the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Refrain: May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace. (Ps. 72:7)

¹ Give the king your jus- | tice, O God,
 and your righteousness to | the king's son;
² **that he may rule your | people righteously**
and the | poor with justice;
³ that the mountains may bring prosperity | to the people,
 and the | hills, in righteousness.
⁴ **Let him defend the needy a- | mong the people,**
rescue the poor, and crush | the oppressor. R
⁵ May he live as long as the sun and | moon endure,
 from one generation | to another.
⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon | the mown field,**
like showers that wa- | ter the earth.
⁷ In his time may the | righteous flourish;
 and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall | be no
 more.
¹⁸ **Blessed are you, Lord God, the | God of Israel;**
you alone do | wondrous deeds!
¹⁹ And blessed be your glorious | name forever,
 and may all the earth be filled with your glory. A- | men. Amen. **R**

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

⁴ Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might

confirm the promises given to the ancestors ⁹ and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰ and again he says,

“Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;

¹¹ and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹² and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation ELW #175 *Gospel Acclamation*”

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the third chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

¹ In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’ ”

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon – Pastor Connie Monson

Hymn of the Day: ELW #256 *"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"*

Affirmation of Faith

We have seen the valley.

We have seen a sky without stars.

**We have seen the longest night,
and still we believe.**

We believe in a with-us God.

We believe in the hope of tomorrow.

We believe that good news is louder than fear.

We believe this good news is for all people.

So even when our knees shake,

**even when our voice trembles,
even when fear is all around us,
we will hold onto that good news.
We will reach for each other.
We will look for God in our midst.
We will sing songs of joy.
We will proclaim:
Unto us, love is born.
We have seen the longest night,
and we have seen unimaginable love.
So still, we believe.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease (*especially*). Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Other intercession: Lord, you know the need for healing, comfort, help or resolution for those we name before you today: Myrna & Richard Northrop, Kermit Delmain, Ed DePerry, Lorayne Reedy, Lois Osterberg, Courtney Byerhof, Bill Bodner, Chuck & Marcia Perry, Colleen Nozal, Kelliann Clapero, Rhiannon Tourdot, Holly Tourdot, Bennett Anderson, Jennifer Schlack, Casey French, Donnie Anderson, Jeanna Morshead-Metelica, Marty Burkel, John & Sharon Hunt, Jaycee Juoni, Gary & Janet Johnson, Britni Zagorski, Allen Hahn, Jean Anderson, Luke Gulstrand, Jarrett Waite, Sarah Norton, Darlene Ludwikoski, the family of Wayne Powers, Gary and Lynette Benzschawel on the death of his mother, and those whose names we hold in our heart. God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

We pray for our migrant neighbors who, like most of us and our ancestors, came to this country for a better life. You who freed the captives, protect them from harm. Help us guard their rights to representation and due process. God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith (*especially Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, whom we commemorate today*). Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(Share a sign of God's peace with one another.)

Offering

**Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come. Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

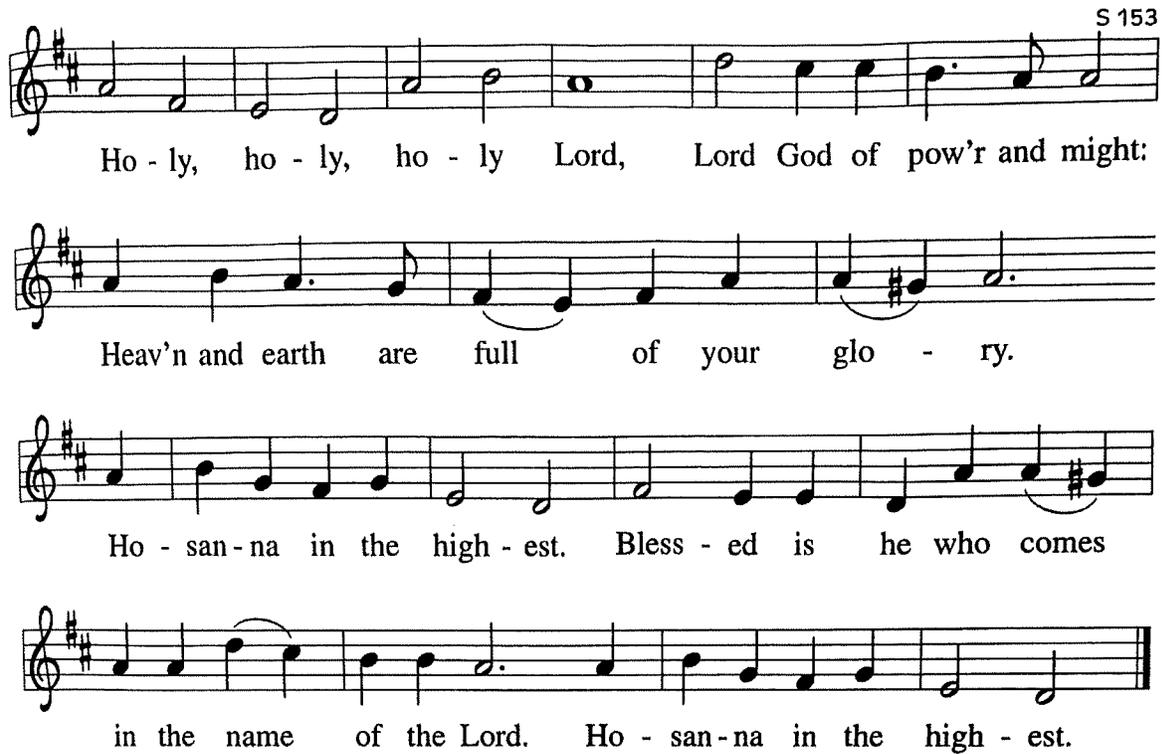
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to
you,
almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
 Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

The 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.

Invitation to Communion

Here is life. God is with us.
Come, receive what God has promised.

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Prayer after Communion

God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Communion Hymn ELW #482 *“I Come with Joy”*

Announcements:

Sunday	AA 7 pm at Immanuel
Monday	South Shore Quilters 9 am at Immanuel; Book Study on Zoom 1 pm
Tuesday	Brunch Bunch 10 am at Bethesda
Wednesday	South Shore Quilters 9 am at Immanuel; Gather at Bethesda 9:30 am; Midday Prayer 12 pm at Bayfield Presbyterian; Advent Services Immanuel at 12:30 pm and Bethesda at 7 pm; John Thiel’s burthday
Thursday	Immanuel Painters 10 am; Juliet Club 11:30 am at Siskiwit Farmhouse
Friday	ROMEO 8:15 am at Siskiwit Farmhouse; Knit Wits 1 pm at Immanuel; Kim Glau’s birthday
Saturday	Linda Barnes’s birthday

Blessing

May God who comes among us,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn: ELW #264 *“Prepare the Royal Highway”*

Dismissal

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Reconciling in Christ Statement

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free,
there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Galatians 3:28

We welcome YOU to Bethesda and Immanuel to participate fully in our congregational life. You who may have experienced exclusion, injustice or racial inequity; You who are young, old, rich, poor; You of all abilities; You from all nations and ethnic backgrounds; You of all sexual orientations, gender identities or gender expression.

We are committed to racial equity, economic equity, gender equity, sexual equity. We are committed to learn, celebrate, advocate and welcome everyone through a series of forums and educational opportunities. May we grow in acceptance and become a voice for inclusion, equity and justice.

No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.