

# Advent

## PREPARE THE WAY

SUNDAY WORSHIP-ADVENT I  
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, HELENA MONTANA  
Sunday, November 29th, 2020

### PRELUDE

#### OPENING HYMN: "Rejoice, Rejoice Believers" #244

*Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;  
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.  
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.*

*The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;  
go forth as he approaches with alleluias clear.  
The marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.  
Arise, O heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.*

*The saints, who here in patience their cross and suff'rings bore,  
shall live and reign forever when sorrow is no more.  
Around the throne of glory the Lamb they shall behold;  
in triumph cast before him their diadems of gold.*

*Our hope and expectations, O Jesus, now appear;  
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see  
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!*

### 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 God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,  
whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.  
Amen.*

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Loving and forgiving God,

**we confess that we are held captive by sin.**

**In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.**

**We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor;**

**we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God.**

**Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven,  
and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.  
May you be strengthened in God's love, + comforted by Christ's peace,  
and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

## **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.**

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

### **LIGHT ONE CANDLE**

*Light one candle for hope, one bright candle for hope.*

*He brings hope to ev-'ry heart. He comes! He comes!*

*Light one candle for peace, One bright candle for peace,*

*He brings peace to ev-'ry heart. He comes! He comes!*

*Light one candle for joy, One bright candle for joy.*

*Ev-'ry nation will find salvation in Bethlehem's baby boy.*

*Light one candle for love, One bright candle for love.*

*He brings love to ev-'ry heart. He comes! He comes!*

*He brings love to ev-'ry heart. He comes! He comes!*

## **FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT PRAYER**

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

## **SPECIAL MUSIC**

## WORD

### Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence —  
as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil —  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.  
You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth  
**before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.**  
**Stir up your might,**  
**and come to save us!**  
Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**O Lord God of hosts,  
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?**

You have fed them with the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

**You make us the scorn of our neighbors;  
our enemies laugh among themselves.**

Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

### **1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: "My Soul In Stillness Waits"**

*Refrain: For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits, truly my hope is in you.*

*(verse sung by cantor)*

*Refrain: For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits, truly my hope is in you.*

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the 13th chapter, beginning with the 24th verse.

**Glory to you, oh Lord.**

### **Mark 13:24-37**

[Jesus said:] "But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, oh Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #257**

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

*O come, O wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

*O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer; O Sun of justice, now draw near  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

*O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
refresh the hearts that long for you;  
restore the broken, make us new.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

**SERMON: Paul Oman Drawn To the Word-Coming of the Son of Man**

**APOSTLES 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 to the dead.  
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 THE CHURCH

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

## 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.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## BENEDICTION

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,  
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,  
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,  
+ now and forever.

**Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN: "Soon and Very Soon" #439

*Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King.*

*No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more cryin' there, we are goin' to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King.*

*No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King,  
No more dyin' there, we are goin' to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King.*

*Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,  
soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King.*

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

## MINISTERING IN WORSHIP TODAY

**Pastor Brad Ulgenes, Preaching & Presiding**  
**Dodie Walsh, Organ**  
**Connie Conley, Choir Director & Cantor**

**Gretchen Munding, Cantor and Lector**  
**Angela Conley, Technology and Sound**

**In our prayers this week:** for our church as we celebrate 125 years of ministry, Billy Hansen, Vern Grimsrud, Karen Bryson, Steve Crosby, Marlys Mattfeldt, Carl Mattfeldt, Carol Anderson, Emma Rose Plute, Matt Annen, Lindsay Annen, Mike Doig, for the families of all who have died because of racism, poverty, and Covid-19, for law enforcement, Patsy Buckingham, Judith Sterling, Greg Johnson, Luken Kestrel, Suzanne Corzine, Jeff Shirley, Jeremy Stockstad, Alex Betz, Georgine Larson, John Shields, Hazel Aasved, Rosita Moe, Nancy Justus, Luke Almas, Tatiana Ceaicovschi, Gina Hultin, Chris Gibbs, Dustin Michelle, Randy Holmes, Lester Anderson, the children at Intermountain, for those who are alone, for those who suffer from depression, for the homeless in our community, and for all who seek health and wholeness

**For those who have died and now rest in God's merciful care:**

Ellen Livers, Kelly Harris, Gordan Justus, Carol Alpiner, Ada Harlan, Todd Ruedisili, Denise Pennington,

Eunice Mattfeldt, Nancy McCoskery, Bessie Schwarting, Dave Hanson, Rick Forrest, Ray Beaver, Steve Sarstad, and all the Saints in heaven

**For those in residential living centers, extended care or homebound:**

Wilma Carlson, Mike Kieckbusch, Donna Anderson, Milo and Hazel Aasved, Esther Fuehrer, Sally Miller, Maury Knutson, Marge Mihelish, Doris Crider, Phillip Kerr

**Missionaries:** Willie, Anne, and Micah Langdji in Cameroon  
Mark and Marina Dotson in Russia

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart; that that barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease, and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.*  
*(Romans 12:12)*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES**

*Keep checking our Facebook page for the most up-to-date information, for inspiring posts, and for live devotions on Wednesday at noon.*

### **WORSHIP UPDATES**

Church Council met on Tuesday, November 17th and decided that due to the rising Covid-19 numbers in our community we will continue with online only worship.

### **COMMUNION AT ST. JOHN'S**

We will host drive-thru communion on Sunday, December 6th from 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and on Thursday, December 24th from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the front of the church. If you would like to schedule a time for communion with Pastor Brad please contact the church office.

### **CARDS 4 KIDS CHRISTMAS CARD PACKAGES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX OF THE CHURCH FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH OF NOVEMBER!!!**

Packages of 15 cards are \$5 apiece with ALL PROCEEDS GOING TO OUR YOUTH PROGRAMS FOR 2021. Cards packages are an assortment of secular and religious themes, handmade and unique. Please make checks out to St. John's Lutheran Church. Thank you for all your support for this ministry for our kids! Questions.....give me a call at 443-6451 or an e-mail at [larrylarison@rocketmail.com](mailto:larrylarison@rocketmail.com)

JANICE LARISON

CARDS 4 KIDS

### **TECH HELP NEEDED**

Are you interested in computers and social media? Would you like to help out with streaming our service? Angela is looking for another person with computer knowledge and a willingness to learn sound and streaming specific technology to help out when she is gone. Please contact her at [ange.m.conley@gmail.com](mailto:ange.m.conley@gmail.com) or call/text 406-461-2584 if interested.

### **PRAYER SHAWLS NEEDED**

We are down to 6 prayer shawls in our stash. If you are able to make more and bring them to church it would be greatly appreciated. We have yarn at church if you need some. If you have questions please call the office or speak with Shirley Hautzinger.

### **VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDY ON MONDAY NIGHTS**

The Virtual Bible Study has moved to Monday nights. Join us, let Bing and Mary know so they can send you the link to join the meeting. [bingcroz@yahoo.com](mailto:bingcroz@yahoo.com)



## **SOCIAL MINISTRY OFFERING FOR NOVEMBER-INTERMOUNTAIN CHILDREN'S HOME**

At times like these, providing Hope & Healing means more than ever. This is why Intermountain's missional work providing Hope & Healing to over 1,200 children, youth, and families every day will not stop. To ensure our care for those who need it most continues as we navigate around the coronavirus (COVID-19), Intermountain's family of 260 professionals continue to provide greater access to care through: Expanded teletherapy platforms, Greater resources for parents and guardians to help them continue healing at home, Total community focus through our partnerships with school districts, community health partners, and Montana health monitoring organizations. St. John's has partnered with Intermountain in the past by providing counselors from FLBC to lead a study and activities for an afternoon, we led a week long VBS onsite for the children, and our Youth Director Gretchen Munding was their guest speaker at the Valentine's Day Tea this year. This is a ministry that is near and dear to our hearts. Please consider making a Social Ministry donation in November to Intermountain. You can mail in your donations to the church or mark the pew offering envelope.

## **SOCIAL MINISTRY GIVING IN DECEMBER**

During this strange year of Covid-19 when we are not gathering together at church, there are many charities, local and worldwide, who still need our support. Here are some ways you can help. Many of our friends and relatives don't need more toys or clothes, so they may appreciate being remembered by having a gift given in their honor to someone who needs it.

### **These are local charities that could use gift cards or money donations:**

1. With food, funds, and fertilizer, the gift of a cow has got it all. With **ELCA Good Gifts** you could give a pig, chickens, a goat, a well, or many other things to someone who needs help. You can go to [goodgifts.elca.org](http://goodgifts.elca.org) and read about the possibilities, and also print out cards that can be sent by mail or digitally. A box of the ornaments and cards will be in the space outside the church office.
2. **Florence Crittenton** helps young women and children. Help make Christmas special for these families and look for our virtual list of giving tree opportunities and instructions, coming soon on St. John's Facebook and or St. John's website. **Gifts need to be back to the church by December 13th and unwrapped.** You may also contact Amy Smiedala with questions and to choose your items. 406-202-3596.
3. **Helena Food Share** provides food for people who need it. Your December Special Offering Social Ministry donations will go to help feed needy families. Please send in your check to office and indicate "Social Ministry" in your memo line.
4. **Friendship Center** provides a safe place for victims escaping domestic violence, stalking and sexual abuse. Gift cards help provide much needed items.

Gift cards can be mailed or dropped off at the church office during the morning office hours. (You may want to call ahead.) Be sure they are labeled as to which organization and the amount of the card. **The Social Ministry committee members will pick them up and deliver them December 21.**