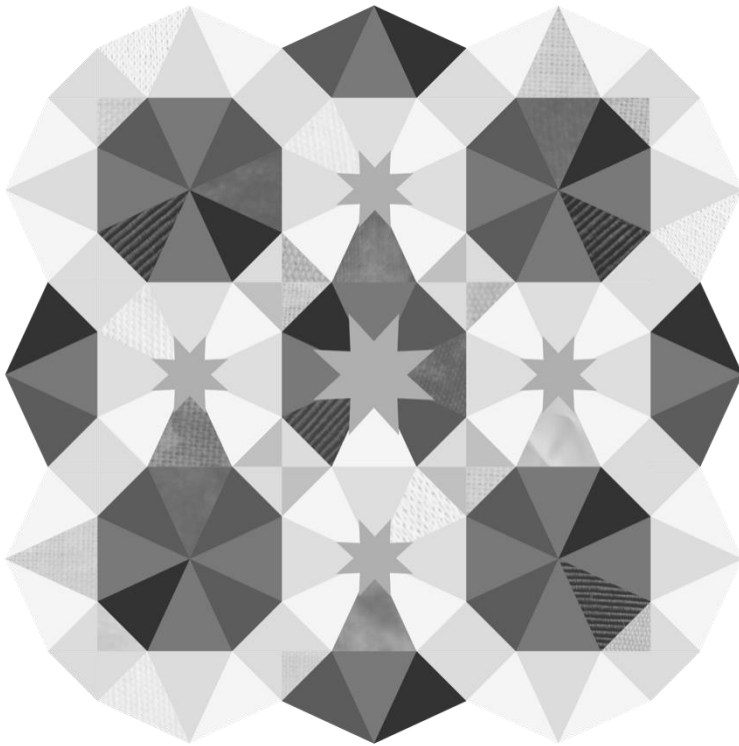


First Sunday of Advent

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

December 1, 2024



FOR THE **BEGINNING**

— YOU ARE A BLESSING —

Welcome to St. Andrew!

At St. Andrew Lutheran Church, we strive to be a loving and welcoming community of faith. We are centered in the Good News of Jesus Christ, who calls us to reconciliation and wholeness in a world of alienation and brokenness.

All are welcome, without exception, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental ability, education, income, or family status.

All are welcome here to worship God, receive the sacraments, and share in fellowship, leadership, and service. We commit to treasuring one another's similarities and differences as one body in Christ.

We are called to provide a safe space in the community as we break down the barriers of isolation. We will continue to discover what it means to be "Reconciling in Christ."

"Welcome one another therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."

- Romans 15:7

Orientation to the Service

This bulletin will guide you through the entire service. Started on page 3, words printed in **bold** are for everyone to say aloud together. Instructions and information are printed in *italics*.

Hymns (songs) are found in the hymnals in the pew racks in front of your seat.

ELW = Evangelical Lutheran Worship (red hymnal)

ACS = All Creation Sings (blue hymnal)

Green-topped Welcome Cards are found in the pew racks in front of your seat. We would love for guests, visitors, and anyone in need of prayer or more information about the church to fill one out. Please place it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher after the service.

Children are welcome in worship! God put the wiggle in children, so please do not feel you have to shush or suppress those wiggles in God's house. All are welcome here! Consider sitting toward the front where it is easier for children to see and hear what is happening in the service. There are worship activity bags available for children just outside the sanctuary, and a staffed nursery is available for very young ones. Ask an usher if you need help locating it.

Restrooms can be found by exiting the back of the sanctuary and turning right. Walk straight until you pass the coffee bar, and you will find the women's and men's restrooms to your right. A gender-neutral, ADA-compliant restroom will be found to your left, near the entrance to the kitchen.

Online access to the bulletin and hymns: standrewlutheran.com/worship/worship-bulletins/

God says,

"I will be with you."

God says,

"You are precious and honored in my sight."

At the beginning of this season,

at the start of this week,

at the top of this hour,

may we wrap ourselves in these words. May we begin again.

Let us worship our Holy God!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings hope. We are
5 wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings hope. Sun of
9 hope now shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your pro - mise. We are
13 wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings hope.

In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

Let us begin with the good news! Let us begin by trusting that we are a blessing, loved by a gracious God. Let us begin with music and singing! Let us begin with warmth and welcome. Let us begin with hope.

Yes, let us begin with hope. Today we light the candle of hope to shine a light in a worn and weary world.

May this be our foundation. May this be our fresh start. May this be our new beginning.

May hope flow forth from here. Amen!

GATHERING HYMN

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came (ELW 265)

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 FOR ILLUMINATION

Let us pray.

Affirming God, how often do you speak to us, and how often do we miss it? How often do you whisper blessings over us that we refuse to hear? Open our hearts. Create space in us to not only hear these words, but to believe the good news tucked between them. We are hungry for your wisdom, so speak to us now. With hope and curiosity, we listen. With hope and curiosity, we dare to begin again.

Amen.

The congregation is seated.

WORD

GOD SPEAKS TO US IN SCRIPTURE READING, PREACHING, AND SONG.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pastor Allison Bengfort

READING

Isaiah 43:1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Now thus says the LORD, the one who created you, O Jacob, who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. ²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. ³For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you. ⁴Because you

are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. ⁵Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; ⁶I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring my children from far away and from the end of the earth—⁷everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

Word of God, word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation may stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

People Look East (ELW 248, verse 1)

**People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Guest, is on the way.**

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And Gabriel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by the angel's words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom

there will be no end.”³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”³⁵ 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.”³⁶ 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.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”³⁸ 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.

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

The congregation is seated.

SERMON

Pastor Allison Bengfort

CONTEMPLATION

During this time of quiet reflection, you are invited to focus on the divine presence among us. May it wrap you up in love, like your favorite quilt or blanket. You are invited to move about the space or remain in your seat. You may choose to engage in one or more of the following contemplative practices:

- *Contemplative walking (aisles between and around the pews)*
- *Candle lighting (back of the sanctuary)*
- *Visio Divina, aka contemplation through visual art (back of the sanctuary)*
- *Prayer around the altar (kneelers and kneeling cushions at the front)*
- *Poetry, Visio Divina, or Reflection (p. 1-10 in the Devotional Booklet in the pew rack in front of your seat)*

At the end of the contemplation time, the cantor will lead us in paperless singing. Please return to your pew during the singing.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Meet us here, gracious God.
Offer your words of blessing.

For the morning soon is breaking, for the morning soon is breaking,
for the morning soon is breaking, the day is drawing nigh. *Refrain*

Christian journey soon be over, Christian journey soon be over,
Christian journey soon be over, the day is drawing nigh. *Refrain*

The congregation may stand.

OFFERTORY VERSE

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers (ELW 244, verse 4)

**Our hope and expectation, 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!**

DIALOGUE

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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your
will be done, on earth as it is 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 forever. Amen.**

The congregation is seated.

SENDING

GOD BLESSES US AND SENDS US IN MISSION TO THE WORLD.

BLESSING

As you leave this place, may you have the wisdom to lean on one another. May you have the courage to hold onto hope, the compassion to do the good that is yours to do, and the confidence to trust that God sees you as a blessing. For in a world full of dead ends, Advent invites us to begin again. So start here. Start now. Start with love and begin again. In the name of the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Fling Wide the Door (ELW 259)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are a blessing!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“Fling Wide the Door”
Lindsey Lane, piano

arr. Joseph Prentiss

Serving in Worship

Presider: Pastor Allison Bengfort
Preacher: Pastor Allison Bengfort
Assisting Minister: Tom Mehlhorn
Acolyte:
Altar Flowers: Noelle Mehlhorn
Altar Guild: Kim Taylor Blakemore
Cantor: Charlotte Cheney
Communion Assistants:
Julie & Jim Aageson

Greeter: Patty Jones
Lector: Pat Christiansen
Musician: Lindsey Lane
Nursery Assistant:
Tech Team: Janet Vorvick,
Chase Isaacson
Ushers: Amy & David Harker
Worship Coordinator:
Zoom Host:



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