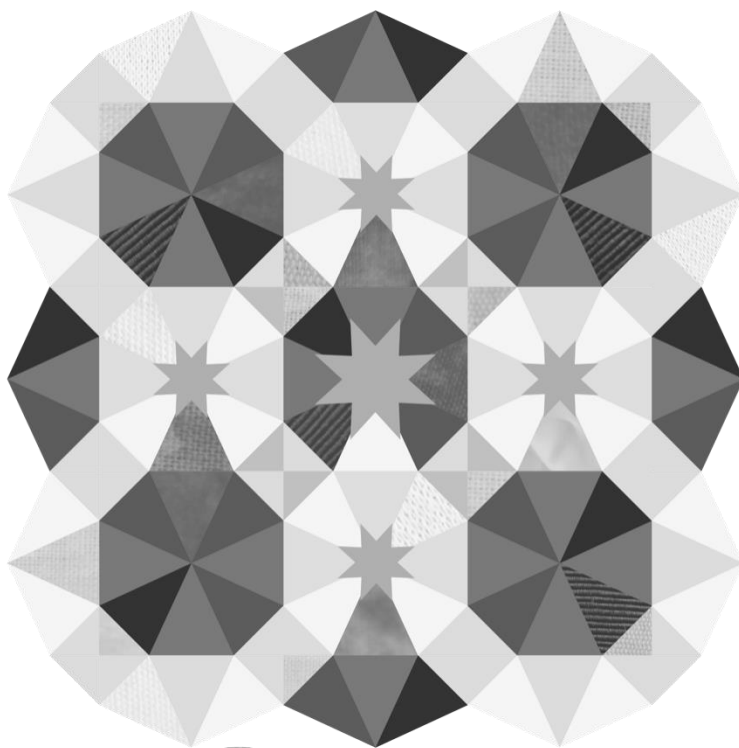


Second Sunday of Advent

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

December 8, 2024



FOR THE **BEGINNING**

— WE CAN'T GO ALONE —

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/



INTRODUCTION

One of life's most essential lessons is that we are never meant to go alone. And yet, modern culture pushed us more and more into lonely silos. If Ruth had followed her culture's norms, she would have gone home to her family of origin after her husband died, but instead, she commits herself to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Together they form a new family and covenant. Ruth and Naomi travel together to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest, foreshadowing the journey Mary and Joseph will one day take to be counted in the census. Both Ruth and Naomi, as well as Mary and Joseph, are unconventional pairs, but if God can bring unlikely people together, God can form us into a covenant community too.

PRELUDE “Hark the Glad Sound! (Theme and Partitas 1, 2, 4)” Paul Bouman
Susan Werner Reiser, organ

GATHERING

THE HOLY SPIRIT CALLS US TOGETHER AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

WELCOME

The congregation may stand.

CALL TO WORSHIP

In a world that is lonely,

we will save a seat for you.

In a world that is anxious,

we will light candles against the gloom.

In a world that is weary,

we will sing songs of joy and truth.

I am not alone.

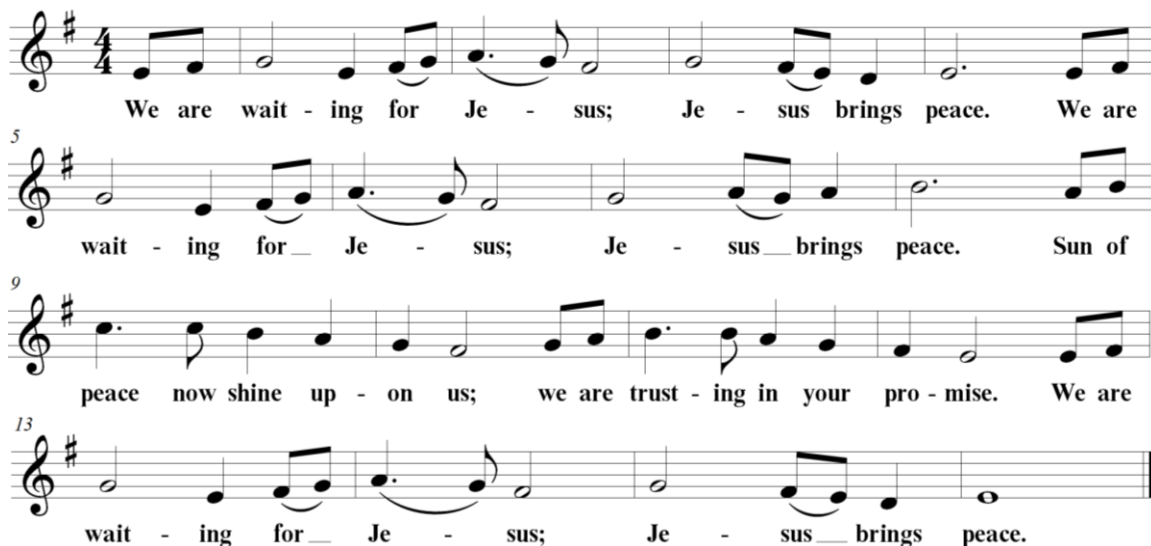
We are not alone.

For here in this place, God is weaving us together.

Light the candles! Sing with joy!

We are a three-cord strand, not easily broken.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH



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

In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?
Let us begin together. Let us begin arm in arm. Let us begin by holding each other up, instead of tearing each other down. Let us begin with words of peace.

Yes, let us begin with peace. Today we light the candles of hope and peace.
May these lights remind us of what could be. May these lights mark a new beginning. May peace flow like a river, and may it start with us.

Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side. May we begin again.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

All Earth Is Hopeful (ELW 266)

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.

Holy God, the words of this world whip around us like a mighty wind. We are caught up in news reports, in text messages, in emails and notifications. We are drowning in updates from the media, caught off guard by the constant hum of it all. But here on this bright morning we remember: you too are speaking. Still the voices around us. Calm our minds and center our hearts so that we can hear your words above the wind. We are leaning closer. We are at the edge of our chairs. We are beginning again. Speak to us, as only you can.

Amen.

The congregation is seated.

WORD

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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kyler Vogt

FIRST READING

Ruth 1:1-22

A reading from Ruth.

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. ²The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. ³But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, ⁵both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. ⁶Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. ⁷So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. ⁸But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. ⁹The LORD grant that you may

find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. ¹⁰They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." ¹¹But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? ¹²Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, ¹³would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me." ¹⁴Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. ¹⁵So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." ¹⁶But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; Where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. ¹⁷Where you die, I will die – there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!" ¹⁸When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her. ¹⁹So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" ²⁰She said to them, "Call me no longer Naomi, call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me. ²¹I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty; why call me Naomi when the LORD has dealt harshly with me, and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?" ²²So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Word of God, word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

A reading from Ecclesiastes.

⁹Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ¹⁰For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. ¹¹Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? ¹²And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Word of God, word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

People, Look East (ELW 248, verse 2)

**Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flow'r may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Rose, is on the way.**

The congregation may stand.

GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-6

The holy gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

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

The congregation is seated.

SERMON

Kyler Vogt

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. 11-18 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 singing the mantra below. Please return to your pew during the singing.

We can't go a - lone here in this place.

We are not a - lone for God is here.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Gracious God,
walk with us.

The congregation may stand.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

All are invited to commune without exception! At the direction of an usher, those wishing to commune may proceed down the center aisle. A piece of gluten-free bread will be placed in your hands. You may dip the bread in the cup of wine (red chalice) or the cup of grape juice (light-colored chalice), or you may choose to partake of the bread only. If you prefer not to

receive communion but would like to receive a blessing, please cross your arms across your chest to indicate this preference. If you would like to receive communion in your seat, please alert an usher, and the elements will be brought to you.

COMMUNION SONG O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (ELW 257, verses 3 & 4)

**O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you have the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O Come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

DISTRIBUTION HYMN Now the Heavens Start to Whisper (ACS 901)

The congregation may stand.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Nourishing God, you have welcomed us at your table where all are welcomed, all are seen, all are fed. Thank you for giving us this glimpse of your kingdom. Thank you for planting hope deep in our bones. Thank you for meeting us in ordinary bread and wine to remind us that it's never too late to build your kingdom here. We are grateful. We are so grateful.

Amen.

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

Hark, the Glad Sound! (ELW 239)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are not alone!
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“Hark the Glad Sound! (Partita 5)”
Susan Werner Reiser, organ

Paul Bouman

Serving in Worship

Presider: Pastor Allison Bengfort
Preacher: Kyler Vogt
Assisting Minister: Kristie Gladhill
Acolyte:
Altar Flowers:
Altar Guild: Patty Jones
Cantor: Allison Katsufakis
Communion Assistant:
Greeter: Patty Jones
Lector: Tara Harper
Musicians: Susan Werner Reiser;
Luis Flores, guitar

Nursery Assistant: Amy Harker
Sanctuary Choir: Gretchen Bancroft,
Pat Christiansen, Kristie Gladhill,
Liz Hardy, Julie Larson,
John Reiser, Lynn Santelmann,
Janet Vorvick, Carol Werner
Tech Team: Paul Navarre,
Chase Isaacson
Ushers: Dan Fako and Tom Lane
Worship Coordinator:
Sister India Jensen Kerr
Zoom Host: Sister India Jensen Kerr

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