

FAITH COVENANT

C H U R C H

Spreading A Love for God and His Glory

December 24, 2023



The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will rejoice over you with loud singing.

Zephaniah 3:17

*Our worship is
a response to
God's initiative.
The pattern of
our worship
reflects the
gospel.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

*The word "Advent" comes from the Latin meaning "coming" or "arrival."
Advent is a time of preparation for the final coming of Jesus, while we give thanks for
the gift of Christ in the past. We meditate on the faithfulness of God to his promises –
past, present, and future.*

***CALL TO WORSHIP:** *Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 2:14, Revelation 19:5*

Leader: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the
government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall
be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting
Father, Prince of Peace.

All: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men
on whom his favor rests.**

Leader: Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be
no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to
establish it and to uphold it with justice and with
righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal
of the LORD of hosts will do this.

All: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men
on whom his favor rests.**

Leader: Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small
and great.

**Indicates
when to stand.
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***COME AND WORSHIP**

Angels from the realms of Glory
Wing your flight o'er the Earth
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim the Messiah's birth

(Chorus)

*Come and worship, come and worship
Come and worship, worship Christ the newborn king*

Shepherds in the fields abiding
Watching o'er the flocks by night
God with man is now residing
Yonder shines the infant light

(Chorus 2x)

Saints before the altar bending
Watching long in hope and fear
Suddenly the Lord descending
In His temple shall appear

(Chorus 2x)

God Calls Us

The Lord
summons his
people to
worship and we
respond in
obedience.

The Lord's call
is a call to
action. We
gather, praise,
adore, give
thanks.

The Call to
Worship is a
joyful summons
and a clear
reminder that
worship is our
coming into
God's presence
by his
command, and
not our
command that
He come into
our presence.

*PRAYER OF PRAISE

*ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH - Hymn #214

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

(Chorus)

Gloria.....in excelsis Deo.

Gloria.....in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be?
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

(Chorus)

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

(Chorus)

COMMON CONFESSION OF SIN

SCRIPTURE OF EXHORTATION: *Deuteronomy 10:12-13*

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?

All: O Lord our God, you are great and mighty. You give justice to the helpless, yet I seek justice for myself and I am slow to seek it for others. You are merciful to the needy, but I give mercy to myself, yet demand my due from all who owe me. Father I am slow to forgive the sins of others, and I am stubborn in doing what you ask of me. Forgive me Lord, for the sake of your Son Jesus, and grant me new and fresh obedience, and a willing heart to yield to your Spirit, that you would be glorified. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN

DECLARATION OF GRACE: *Psalms 9:9-10*

The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.

God Cleanses Us

The biblical response to God's call to be in his presence is confessing our sins. We humble ourselves when we approach our God. This is a corporate prayer of all God's people. It is a great privilege of the gospel that we can stand forgiven before the Lord of glory.

***HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING - Hymn #203**

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King."

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold him come, Offspring of the Virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King."

Hail! the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the son of Righteousness!

Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.

Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King."

Offering

We give back to
God a portion
of what he has
given us to use
to declare that
he is Lord of all.

(This is part of
our service as a
church family,
and visitors
should not feel
obligated to
participate.)

OFFERTORY & RESPONSE

*Reminder: please sign and pass the Attendance Register down the pew.
Children ages 4-6 excused for Children's Church (downstairs Corner Classroom)*

LO HOW A ROSE E'ER BLOOMING - Hymn #221 vs. 1-2, 4-5

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung
of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter
when halfspent was the night

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind
To show God's love aright, she bore to men a Savior
when halfspent was the night

This flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air
dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere
True man, yet very God, from sin and death he saves us
and lightens our every load

O Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe
O Savior, King of glory, who dost our weakness know
bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of heaven
and to the endless day

Sermon Series: Advent 2023—Anticipating Hope

Pastor Lloyd Pierson, PhD.

God Rejoices: Zephaniah 3:14-20

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. ¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. ¹⁷ The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will rejoice over you with loud singing. ¹⁸ I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach. ¹⁹ Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰ At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes," says the LORD.

I. God's Psalm of Joy

II. God's Promise of Restoration

Questions for Further Reflection:

1. How is it that the Lord will rejoice over his people? (Read Isaiah 62:5, Luke 15:7). Do you struggle with the thought of God rejoicing over you? Why do you think some struggle with the sheer grace of God's grace?
2. Consider: "The fulfillment of a divine promise is not the exhaustion of it. When a man gives you a promise, and he keeps it, there is an end of the promise; but it is not so with God. When he keeps his word to the full, he has but begun. He is prepared to keep it, and keep it, and keep it forever and ever."—Charles Spurgeon. How does this encourage you?
3. The Lord stands against those who oppress others. How is this also to be a mark of the Church? What might that look like?
4. What unique challenges do we face as a prosperous and affluent nation when we are called to live by faith and not by sight regarding the future Kingdom of God?
5. How has Zephaniah helped prepare you to live as Christ's ambassador between the Advents? Where do you struggle believing the reality of the gospel in your own life?

Children's Question

Do you think of God being joyful? Does it encourage you to know the Lord delights in his people and rejoices over them?

God

Consecrates Us

Consecrate means to make holy, to set apart. The Word of God does that for the lives of believers. Through the sermon, confessions of faith, and the offering we are sanctified for service to our Lord to joyfully offer up our lives to him.

**God Communes
with Us**

The Lord
strengthens and
nourishes our
faith through a
sacramental
meal. Through
Jesus, commun-
ion with God
has been
reestablished.
The covenant
has been
renewed. The
Lord's Supper is
the gospel
made visible for
us and we share
in it as the full
community
of God's
people.

***GOOD CHRISTIAN MEN, REJOICE - Hymn #207**

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today
Ox and ass before Him bow, and He is in the manger now
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door, and we are blessed forevermore
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian men rejoice, with heart and soul and voice
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all, to gain His everlasting hall
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Wine is located in the two outer rings; juice is located in the center ring.
(See FCC observance on below)*

PRAYER FOR THE CONGREGATION

We observe the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day as the climax of our worship service. We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized disciples of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and His body—the Church. Visiting children who have not been examined by their church's leadership, we ask to refrain. By sharing in the Supper, you are acknowledging to our church that you are in covenant with our Triune God through the person and work of Jesus Christ. If you are in doubt about your participation, please refrain. Wine and bread are the elements of the supper as instituted by Jesus Christ. We recommend the use of wine; however we offer both juice and wine in the tray to allow true liberty of conscience.

*CHRISTMAS DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Praise God who came in infant low
To bear our flesh and grace bestow
Born in a lowly manger stall
A child who shall redeem us all

And as creation held its breath
The firstborn came in our defense
To stand before his father's throne
And through his blood our lives atone

For this our mighty Savior came,
To wed our hearts and bear our shame
For condemnation has no place
For those who trust in Jesus' name

To us a child is born today
Immanuel in flesh displayed
To once for all his people save
Rejoice! Give thanks, and praise his name

*BENEDICTION

If you are in need of personal prayer, an elder is available up front after the service.

God Commissions Us

Having been richly blessed by the Lord in our worship, we are sent forth as his ambassadors of reconciliation into the world. Our worship of God as his people now extends into our lives throughout the week. We are to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to him in all areas of our lives.

Leaders & Staff

Senior Pastor Lloyd Pierson, Ph.D. — Associate Pastor John Sackett

Music Director/Assistant: Lisa Iddings/Laura Sackett

Director of Women's Ministries: Sarah Morrison Refuge Director: Sissy Hashley

Staff: Hanni Hanson, Carlynn Stahlberg, Kelly Brown, Jenny Mattern

Elders: Tim Anderson, Jason Davis, Sean Iddings, Tom Jentz,

Trent Neumann, Don Olmsted, Matt Riley, Micah Tinkham

Deacons: Wade Carroll, Terry Falk, Kyle Hanson, Jeff McGarvey,

Ryan Petersen, Mike Stahlberg, Mike Thompson, Bruce Tulloch

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LOCAL MINISTRY TO PRAY FOR: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Pastor Matthew Nelson

MISSIONARIES TO PRAY FOR: Jamie & Alyssa Shattenberg, Madagascar

HOLIDAY SEASON SERVICE TIMES: Next Sunday is the final week of services at 8:15 & 10:15. We will resume our regular schedule Jan. 7, including starting up the winter quarter of Sunday school.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE TIMES: Candlelight services tonight will be held at 4pm, 5:30pm, & 7pm. Nursery will be available at the 4pm service.

SERVING: December Deacon - Terry Falk

Today (1st service/2nd service)

Ushers: Nick & Hanni Hanson / Mike & Julie Thompson

Children's Church: Jentz / Tim Anderson

Nursery: Streits

Fellowship Hosts: Laura Pierson & Kim von Olhausen

Communion Prep/Cleanup: Carolyn Duncan / Niam Moody

Next Sunday December 31

Ushers: Mike & Carlynn Stahlberg / Lancasters

Children's Church: Hanni Hanson / Pastor

Nursery: Orndorff & Mattern

Fellowship Hosts: Amy Haymond & Patti Albert

Communion Prep/Cleanup: Gloria Tronstad / Chris Scrima

WEEKLY/MONTHLY

Sunday Worship Services

8:15 & 10:15am

Vespers

2nd Sunday @ 6:30 pm

Elder/Deacon Meeting

3rd Tuesdays 7 pm

Wednesdays

Men's Breakfast 6:30 am

Career Group 7 pm