

First Christian Reformed Church
Lynden, Washington
December 3, 2023 ~ 10:30 AM Worship Service
First Sunday of Advent

Advent Reading, Lighting of the Advent Wreath, and Prayer

Call to Worship:

Our souls magnify the Lord!

Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!

The mighty One has done great things for us!

Holy is God's name!

Let us worship God.

For God is our Maker and our Redeemer; from generation to generation

God's Greeting

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art:
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

("Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" words by Charles Wesley, music by Roland Hugh Prichard, descant by Paul Sjolund © Public Domain CCLI #358926, Streaming License #20317932)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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 thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

("O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" words Latin, 12th cent.; u. composite, tune 15th century, adapted by Thomas Helmore (1854), Public Domain CCLI #358926, Streaming License #20317932)

Hark, the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long!
Let every heart prepare a throne, and every voice a song.

He comes the prisoners to release, in Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, your welcome shall proclaim;
And heaven's eternal arches ring with your beloved name.

("Hark, the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes" Philip Doddridge/Thomas Haweis © Public Domain CCLI #358926, Streaming License #20317932)

Call to Confession: Isaiah 53:4-6

*Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

Prayer of Confession

Assurance: Isaiah 55:6-7

*"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

Profession of Our Faith: *Apostles' Creed*

**I believe in God the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.**

And in Jesus Christ,

**his only begotten Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary;
suffered under Pontius Pilate;
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead
he ascended to heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he shall come to judge
the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit.

**I believe in a holy catholic church,
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Come, Behold the Wondrous Mystery

Come behold the wondrous mystery, in the dawning of the King;
He the theme of heaven's praises, robed in frail humanity.
In our longing, in our darkness, now the light of life has come;
Look to Christ, who condescended, took on flesh to ransom us.

Come behold the wondrous mystery, slain by death the God of life;
But no grave could e'er restrain Him, praise the Lord, He is alive!
What a foretaste of deliverance, how unwavering our hope;
Christ in power resurrected, as we will be, when he comes.

("Come, Behold the Wondrous Mystery" Matt Papa, Matt Boswell, Michael Bleecker © 2013 McKinney Music, Inc. Love Your Enemies Publishing, CCLI #358926 Stream #20317932)

Offertory Prayer & Offering: Christian School Tuition Assistance

Morning Prayer

Scripture: *Luke 1:5-25*

⁵ *In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.* ⁶ *And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord.* ⁷ *But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.* ⁸ *Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty,* ⁹ *according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.* ¹⁰ *And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense.* ¹¹ *And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.* ¹² *And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.*

¹³ *But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John."* ¹⁴ *And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth,* ¹⁵ *for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.* ¹⁶ *And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God,* ¹⁷ *and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."* ¹⁸ *And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."* ¹⁹ *And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news."* ²⁰ *And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time."* ²¹ *And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple.* ²² *And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute.* ²³ *And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.* ²⁴ *After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying,* ²⁵ *"Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."*

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Message: *Zechariah's Angel*

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

A Communion Hymn for Christmas

Prince of Glory, gracing heav'n ere time began,
Now for us embracing death as Son of Man.
By Your birth so lowly, by Your love so true,
By Your cross most holy, Lord, we worship You!

Bethl'hem's Incarnation, Calv'ry's bitter cross,
Wrought for us salvation by Your pain and loss.
Now we fall before You in this holy place;
Prostrate we adore You for Your gift of grace.

With profoundest wonder we Your body take,
Laid in manger yonder, broken for our sake.
Hushed in adoration we approach the cup;
Bethl'hem's pure oblation freely offered up.

(^cA Communion Hymn for Christmas: words by Margaret Clarkson, tune by Tom Fetteske, © 1986 Word Music, CCLI# 358926 Streaming License #20317932)

God's Blessing

A Communion Hymn for Christmas

Christmas Babe so tender, Lamb who bore our blame,
How shall sinners render praises due Your name?
Do Your own good pleasure in the lives we bring;
In Your ransomed treasure reign forever King!

(^cA Communion Hymn for Christmas: words by Margaret Clarkson, tune by Tom Fetteske, © 1986 Word Music, CCLI# 358926 Streaming License #20317932)

Pastor: Robert W
Readers: Margaret D, Jeanne J
Prayer: Mark T, Roger P
Music: Nancy Z, Cheryl K, Ben K

Offering will be received for Christian School Tuition Assistance, a fund used to help cover tuition of First church families who send their children to Christian schools.

Love Offering will be received for the First CRC Adoption Fund, to help those in the congregation with the high cost of adoption. For more information, talk to any deacon.

Nursery is available with a paging system for children under 3 years during worship service in the Education Building.

Children's Church is available for children 3 years – 3rd grade. Children are dismissed during the worship service.

Worship services are also broadcast live in the basement and streamed online for anyone unable to worship in the sanctuary.

An assistive listening system is available in the sanctuary; to use this system, switch hearing aids to "T".

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