

Sunday Worship Service – November 30, 2025
First Sunday of Advent
The hymns are from ELWB

Words of Welcome

Land Acknowledgement & Welcome Statement

Introduction to the Theme of the Bible Readings*

Today's Bible readings help us prepare our hearts and minds for the arrival of Jesus. The reading from the gospel of Matthew reminds us that it is always good to be ready, for we never know when a guest might appear on our doorstep. Let us walk in the light, and get our house ready, in order to welcome the Christ child when he finally comes.

As we prepare to lit the first candle on our Advent wreath, the candle of peace, we focus on God's peace that surpasses all understanding.

Advent Wreath Teaching

Advent Wreath Lighting

The first candle is the candle of peace. It reminds us that God wants all people to live together in harmony. God has promised that the Holy Spirit will live forever in our hearts to bring peace.

(the first candle is lit)

God of peace and mercy, come to us now in the fullness of your Spirit, that we may know your peace and forgiveness. Help us to worship you, to hear your Word, and to respond with faithfulness. Help us to be like Jesus in all we are and do. Amen.

A Candle is Burning¹ (tune: #277 *Away in a Manger*)

Verse 1

A candle is burning a candle of PEACE

A candle to signal that conflict must cease

For Jesus is coming to show us the way

A message of peace humbly laid in the hay.

¹ Written by rev Sue Neville, ELCIC pastor of Eastern Synod

Prayer of Confession*

God of peace, you call us to wait, to watch, to be ready.
 But we are so easily distracted, busily doing other things.
 We grow drowsy and complacent.
 Give us wisdom, as we prepare for your coming.
 Forgive our foolishness and our impatience.
 Restore us by your grace.
 Look upon us with your favour, that we might know your presence.
 Shape us into vessels of blessing, for we are your children,
 longing to touch your Spirit. Amen.

Words of Assurance

God calls us to be watchful, awakened to new possibilities and vibrant growth. Know that God restores us to abundant life.
 We are recreated in God's holy image
 With growth in the Spirit, we know that God is near and forgives us:
 in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

#259 Gathering Hymn "*Fling Wide the Door*" (v.1-2,4)

- 1. Fling wide the door, unbar the gate; The King of glory comes in state;
 The Lord of lords and King of kings The Savior of the world who brings
 His great salvation to the earth. So raise a shout of holy mirth
 And praise our God and Lord, Creator, Spirit, Word.**

- 2. He is the rock of our belief, The heart of mercy's gentle self.
 His kingly crown is holiness; His scepter is his loveliness;
 He brings our sorrows to an end. Now gladly praise our king and friend,
 And worship him with song For saving us from wrong.**

- 4. Come, Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ; Our hearts are open wide in trust.
 Oh, show us now your lovely grace, Upon our sorrows shine your face,
 And let your Holy Spirit guide Our journey in your grace so wide.
 We praise your holy name, From age to age the same!**

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.

Call to Worship*

With peace we enter the house of God!

Here we lay aside our differences and pray for one another.

Here we catch a glimpse of light, a promise of hope and new life.

Here we wait for the birth of the one

who will teach us how to love and serve.

With peace we enter the house of God!

Prayer of the Day*

God of peace, we lament the inability of human beings to seek and find paths of peace or to recognize a shared humanity and shared desires for safety, security, and a home in which to flourish. Give courage to those who show your love and compassion, and to all who follow Jesus seeking paths of peace. Bring the peace that passes all understanding into the midst of the conflict in our lives and the conflicts in our world. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

In the reading from Isaiah, the visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

This is what Isaiah, Amoz's son, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In the days to come the mountain of God's house will be the highest of the mountains. It will be lifted above the hills; peoples will stream to it.

Many nations will go and say, "Come, let's go up to God's mountain, to the house of Jacob's God so that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in God's paths." Instruction will come from Zion; God's word from Jerusalem.

God will judge between the nations, and settle disputes of mighty nations.

Then they will beat their swords into iron plows and their spears into pruning tools. Nation will not take up sword against nation; they will no longer learn how to make war. Come, house of Jacob, let's walk by God's light.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading: Romans 13:11-14

In the reading from Romans, Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

As you do all this, you know what time it is. The hour has already come for you to wake up from your sleep. Now our salvation is nearer than when we first had faith. The night is almost over, and the day is near. So let's get rid of the actions that belong to the darkness and put on the weapons of light.

Let's behave appropriately as people who live in the day, not in partying and getting drunk, not in sleeping around and obscene behavior, not in fighting and obsession. Instead, dress yourself with Jesus Christ, and don't plan to indulge your selfish desires.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

#528 Gospel Acclamation "**Come and Fill Our Hearts**"

1. **Come and fill our hearts with your peace.**

You alone, O Lord, are holy.

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Alleluia! (2x)

Gospel Reading: Matthew 24:36-44

In the gospel from Matthew, Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of God will come unannounced.

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 24th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

"But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the heavenly angels and not the Son. Only God knows. As it was in the time of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Human One. In those days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. They didn't know what was happening until the flood came and swept them all away. The coming of the Human One will be like that. At that time there will be two men in the field. One will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill. One will be taken and the other

left. Therefore, stay alert! You don't know what day the Lord is coming. But you understand that if the head of the house knew at what time the thief would come, he would keep alert and wouldn't allow the thief to break into his house. Therefore, you also should be prepared, because the Human One will come at a time you don't know.

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

Sermon

#260 Hymn of the Day “*The King Shall Come*” (v.1-2, 4-5)

**1. The King shall come when morning dawns, And light triumphant breaks;
When beauty gilds the eastern hills, And life to joy awakes.**

**2. Not as of old, a little child, To bear, and fight, and die,
But crowned with glory like the sun, That lights that morning sky.**

**4. O, brighter than that glorious morn, Shall dawn upon our race,
the day when Christ, in splendor comes, And we shall see his face.**

**5. The King shall come when morning dawns, And light and beauty brings;—
Hail! Christ the Lord; your people pray come quickly, King of kings.**

Affirmation of Faith for Advent²

**We believe in God, creator and lover of the earth,
origin and destiny of us all.**

**We believe in Jesus the Christ—
God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn—
who emerges as the herald of hope, God's laughter in the face of despair.
Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives,
and is leading the way to the land of promise
where justice and peace will flourish.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who implants the seed of truth,

² <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/11/advent-affirmation-of-faith.html>— written by Nathan Nettleton, and posted on his Laughingbird website.

brings us to birth as the body of Christ,
and empowers us to confront and transform
all that is corrupt, degrading and deceitful.

We believe in the coming reign of God.
Announced by John the Baptist, it has drawn near to us in Jesus,
and will be consummated in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven,
when all who have passed through the world's deep sorrow
will be raised from the waters, robed in righteousness,
and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God's desire.

For the coming of that day on this day, we pray:
Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

Prayers of Intercession³

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation. Prayer petitions will end with “God of peace” and the congregation is invited to respond by saying: **“receive our prayer.”**

A brief silence.

God of the people, we come seeking wisdom and instruction. Uphold and strengthen lay leaders, teachers, deacons, pastors, and bishops. Teach us your ways and lead us in your paths. God of peace, **receive our prayer.**

God of the earth, we seek your goodness in the grandeur of creation. Empower us to care for forests and oceans, as we see you in the world around us. God of peace, **receive our prayer.**

God of the nations, grant wisdom to leaders, judges, and mediators. Cast out words of hate and transform them into words for building up community. Remake implements of war to sow peace. God of peace, **receive our prayer.**

God of healing, bring comfort and strength. We pray for our kindred and companions who are ill or despairing (*especially . . . and those affected by HIV and AIDS as we remember World AIDS Day*). Surround all with care and consolation. God of peace, **receive our prayer.**

³ <https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2025-11-30/0#texts>

God of new possibilities, when addiction wounds, jealousy tears down, and relationships fray, show us how to journey with one another. Nurture therapists, counselors, and sponsors in their care for others.
God of peace, **receive our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

Offering Prayer*

God of peace, **in gratefulness for calling us as your own, we offer you our thanks and praise. Receive the gifts of our hands, and use them to bring light to the darkness, and hope to places of despair. Amen.**

Holy Communion⁴

God is with you. **And also with you.**
Come, Emmanuel into our longing hearts. **We lift them up to You.**
As we gather at this table, **In anticipation and hope.**

God of hopeful expectation, who enters into our stories,
who births new life into creation,
who invites us into a rich and restoring relationship.
We come before you with humble hearts To greet you in our midst.

You were there when creation burst into being, with endless possibilities.
You were there when the Israelites tasted liberty,
and you opened their eyes to new freedom.
You were there, with Mary, when she became a powerful vessel and witness,
to birth love into the world.
You were there with Jesus when he prayed in the garden,
when he confronted death and brought resurrection life to your people.

And you are with us now, as we gather at your table;

⁴ Written by Rev Tanya Ramer, ELCIC pastor in the Eastern Synod

Your meal and gift of love for all who come hungry and thirsty today.
 We come, like those first disciples,
 gathered around the table to hear Jesus' words of promise and hope.

On the night that he last ate with his disciples,

Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat, this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, Jesus took the cup,
 Gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the covenant in my blood,
 Shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering Jesus' life, death and resurrection,
 We offer these fruits of creation, bread and wine,
 And ourselves in grateful service.

Thank you for your Spirit who works in and among us,
 in times of hope-filled anticipation.
 Who strengthens and sustains us,
 and who, challenges and prods us.
 Who gives us life and continues to surprise us with extravagant grace.
 Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.
 All honour and glory are yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen

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.**

Communion *(for online worshippers)*

The body of Christ given for you. *(eat bread)*

The blood of Christ shed for you. *(drink wine)*

Communion Distribution

- L We believe that Jesus is the true host of this meal intended for the community of faith. Jesus invites all and welcomes all to this meal of forgiveness and grace where we receive Christ's presence in the bread and the wine or grape juice.

We believe that Christ is present in the bread and wine, just as Jesus is present in and among each and everyone of us.

Therefore, we practice an open communion table at Bread of Life Which means that if it is your desire to receive holy communion, we believe the Holy Spirit has placed that desire in your heart and it is Jesus who calls you and invites you.

We offer bread and gluten free bread.

If you wish to receive gluten free bread, just let me know.

We also offer wine and grape juice.

The wine is red and the grape juice is white.

At this time, I will invite our communion assistants and usher forward as we prepare for communion distribution.

For anyone with mobility challenges, we will commune you in your place at the end.

The congregation is invited to begin singing the communion hymn.

Commune assistants, then assistant communes pastor.

#468 Communion Hymn "Around You, O Lord Jesus"

1. **Around you, O Lord Jesus, your own you gather still
to share the feast you give us with grace our lives to fill.
You say to us so lovingly, "Take, eat! This is my body!
Take, drink! This is my blood!"**

2. **We hear your invitation, and heed, O Lord, your call;
your word of consolation is spoken here to all.
It draws us to your loving heart; it brings to us your blessing,
which never will depart.**
3. **We are you own forever; until our final breath
we will be true and never – in joy, in grief, in death –
depart from you, for you are still among your people dwelling,
as you have said you will.**

Communion Blessing

- L** May the love and forgiveness of God,
that is present in this meal of bread and wine,
strengthen you and nourish you in your journey of faith,
confident in God's unconditional love for you.

Prayer after Communion

- A** We give you thanks almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the
healing power of this gift of love and forgiveness. Strengthen us through this
gift, in faith toward you in love toward one another. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Announcements

Blessing*

- L** Stay awake for God is coming.
Prepare your heart, for God is near.
In the darkness, a candle of peace burns brightly.
In the quiet, God speaks to us.
Go with hope, and remain aware and awake,
In the name of + God our Creator,
Jesus our Friend,
and the Holy Spirit, our Comforter. Amen

#438 Sending Hymn "My Lord, What a Morning"

Refrain: **My Lord, what a morning; my Lord, what a morning; Oh,**

my Lord, what a morning, when the stars begin to fall.

1. **You will hear the trumpet sound, to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall. (Refrain)**
2. **You will hear the sinner cry, to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall. (Refrain)**
3. **You will hear the Christian shout, to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall. (Refrain)**

Sending

A Go in peace, to love and serve God. **Thanks be to God!**

Sources:

- Bible passages (except where otherwise indicated) from Common English Bible (CEB) and have been adapted for inclusive language.
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