

Trinity Lutheran Church – ELCA

612 N. Water Street, Sparta, Wisconsin, Tel. (608) 269-5081
Office Email: office@tlcsparta.org Website: www.tlcsparta.org

2nd Sunday of Advent

December 6, 2020

9:00 a.m. Worship – Live streaming on Facebook and YouTube

**Our worship service will also be recorded
and will be available on our website www.tlcsparta.org**

Order of Worship

Prelude

Welcome

Lighting of Advent Candles

All: **Two candles, burning bright,
chasing away the darkness from light. Two candles, glowing light,
The blessing of God, giving new sight.**

Reader: Let us pray. Dear God, we pray that our hearts will be ready for your coming through your Son, Jesus the Christ. Help us to see how you call us to prepare. **Amen.**

Light Two Candles

Hymn: *The King Shall Come* #260

The King shall come when morning dawns and light triumphant breaks,
when beauty gilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes.

Not as of old a little child, to bear and fight and die,
but crowned with glory like the sun that lights the morning sky.

Oh, brighter than the rising morn when Christ, victorious, rose
and left the lonesome place of death, despite the rage of foes.

Oh, brighter than that glorious morn shall dawn upon our race
the day when Christ in splendor comes, and we shall see his face.

The King shall come when morning dawns and light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray: come quickly, King of kings.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Reading: Isaiah 40.1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

⁶A voice says, “Cry out!” And I said, “What shall I cry?”
All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.
⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God
will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with
strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of
Judah, “Here is your God!”

¹⁰See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather
the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reading: 2Peter 3.8-15a

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years,
and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some
think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to
repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will
pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth
and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. ¹¹Since all these things are to be
dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness
and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of
which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with

fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Gospel: Mark 1.1-8

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
 who will prepare your way;
³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
 ‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
 make his paths straight,’ ”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Sermon

Hymn: *Lost in the Night*

Lost in the night do the people yet languish,
longing for morning the darkness to vanquish,
plaintively sighing with hearts full of anguish.
Will not day come soon? Will not day come soon?

Must we be vainly awaiting the morrow?
Shall those who have light no light let us borrow,
giving no heed to our burden of sorrow?
Will you help us soon? Will you help us soon?

Sorrowing wand'lers, in darkness yet dwelling,
dawned has the day of a radiance excelling,
death's deepest shadows forever dispelling.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!

Light o'er the land of the needy is beaming;
rivers of life through its deserts are streaming,
bringing all peoples a Savior redeeming.
Come and save us soon! Come and save us soon!

Text: Nordic hymn; tr. Olav Lee, 1859-1943, alt.
Text © 1932 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Prayers

God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world.
Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise.
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work. Make their generous lives an example for all.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sharing the Peace

Offering

Offering Prayer

Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. **Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

During the Great Thanksgiving, the Pastor will invite the designated communion leader to do the following: *At this time, I invite the home leader to lift up the bread and wine as I proclaim the words of institution.*

Lord's Prayer

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

Holy Communion

Now the communion leader will repeat after the Pastor, "This is the body of Christ given for you, this is the blood of Christ shed for you." And then you are to distribute the bread and wine to those gathered in your home.

Prayer After Communion

Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, now and forever. **Amen.**

Hymn: All Earth is Hopeful #266

All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last! Furrows lie open for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people who struggle to see how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.

People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell: "A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";
she conceived him, "God with us," our brother, whose birth restores hope and courage to
children of this earth.

Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared; new highways opened, new protocols
declared. Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace! All clear ev'ry gateway, in
haste, come out in haste!

We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib. This same Lord Jesus today has come to live
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946 Spanish text © 1993 and English text
© 1995 Centro de Pastoral Liturgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.