**Worship Plan for Advent, December 24, 2017 – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,

who comes to wake us from sleep,

who leads us into the light of grace.

**Amen.**

Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin

against God and neighbor.

God of all time,

**we confess that we have not prepared**

**for your merciful reign among us.**

**We ignore our neighbors in need**

**and fail in the labor of justice and peace.**

**In your mercy forgive us.**

**Grant us wisdom to welcome your light**

**and to seek the things that will endure**

**until Christ comes again in glory.**

**Amen.**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven

and all things are made new.

Rejoice in this good news!

**Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG**

**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.**

*(to be read by variety of families….)*

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

**ADULT CHOIR ANTHEM**

*(The lesson is read by the lay assistant)*

**The lesson** 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

*A reading from the Second Samuel*

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, 2the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” 3Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.”

4But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 5Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? 6I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. 7Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” 8Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; 9and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, 11from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house.

16Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

*The reading may be concluded:*

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand to welcome the Gospel.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*(The gospel is read by the pastor)*

**THE GOSPEL** Luke 1:26-38

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

26In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. 28And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” 29But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” 34Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” 35The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 36And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. 37For nothing will be impossible with God.” 38Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

*The gospel concludes:*

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDEN’S MESSAGE**

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**APOSTLE’S CREED**

**I believe in God,**

**the Father almighty,**

**creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,**

**God’s only Son, our Lord,**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

**born of the virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died, and was buried;**

**he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;**

**he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at**

**the right hand of the Father,**

**and he will come to judge**

**the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the holy catholic church,**

**the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,**

**and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*(The pastor reads the introduction and the ending,   
the lay assistant reads the indented petitions.)*

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Guided by the light of Christ,   
let us pray for the coming dawn of joy, healing, and comfort for all God’s people.

*A brief silence.*

Your eternal reign has come into the world. Give us ears to hear your call to serve your kingdom, and send us out to those who are hurting and in need of good news. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**.

You created the mystery and beauty of the earth. Replenish rivers, lakes, seas, and all bodies of water, so that plants, animals, and humans can have life and be refreshed. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**.

You bring down the powerful and raise up the lowly. Where war rages, shatter hatred with forgiveness and peace. Where fear rules, make your all-powerful and eternal presence known. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**.

You remember us with mercy, Lord, as you have done for all generations. Fill us, comfort us, strengthen us, and enlighten us. Make your will known to all in need. Today we pray especially for….Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**.

You called Mary to bear your Son. We pray for pregnant women, for mothers and fathers of infants and small children, and especially for couples who bear the pain of infertility, miscarriage, or stillbirth. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**.

Your kingdom has no end. With your servants throughout time, women and men, old and young, unite us forever in your reign of peace and joy.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer**.

We raise our prayers to you, O God,   
in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord

**Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & OFFERING**

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Holy One,   
the beginning and the end, the giver of life:  
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.  
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.  
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you in the prophets’ hopes and dreams.  
Blessed are you for Mary’s openness to your will.  
Blessed are you for your Son, Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord 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, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying;

“This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word   
dwelling among us full of grace and truth.  
We remember our new birth in Jesus’ death and resurrection.  
And we look with hope for your coming.  
**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.  
Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us.  
Awaken your people. Fill us with your light.  
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

And teach us to pray…

**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.**

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.

Share in the feast of salvation.

**Thanks be to God.**

**COMMUNION**

*(The prayer after communion is read by the lay assistant)*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God for whom we wait,

you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share.

Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts,

and send us forth to be your people in the world,

announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord

**Amen.**

**Blessing**

May Christ, the Sun of righteousness,

shine upon you and scatter the darkness

from before your path.

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Sending Song**

*(The dismissal is given by the lay assistant)***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**