

**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and  
St. Theodore of Canterbury Episcopal Church  
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*Celebration, Worship, and Communion Service  
Second Sunday of Advent  
December 10, 2023*

## PRELUDE

played by organist

## PIANO DUETS

Cedric Elmer and Sharon Heck

*“The First Nowell and God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen”*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## OPENING HYMN

LBW [Green Book] # 26

*“Prepare the Royal Highway”*

## GREETING

P Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the promised gifts of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

C **Amen.**

P God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

C **Everlasting God, you love justice, and you are displeased with our wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that often make us reluctant to work against oppression. We can become complicit in systems of exploitation. We tend to choose comfort over courage. We have become careless with creation’s bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.**

P Hear these words of assurance: God clothes us with garments of salvation and covers us with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of + Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. God’s covenant is eternal, and God’s blessing rests upon us all.

C **Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**C** 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.**

### **Second Sunday of Advent**

*Use this blessing when lighting two candles.*

Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again. You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare. We ask that peace abound, until none are hurt or destroyed over all the earth. **Amen.**

**Congregation sings verses 1 and 2**

**WOV [Blue Book] # 630**

*“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”*

## WE HEAR GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED

### INTRODUCTION

*The overall theme of the Advent Season is the proclamation that the Lord is coming into our lives each day, as he came for our world 2000 years ago; and, as Peter reminds us in his second letter, Jesus also promised that he will come again on an unknown day at the end of time. The readings this day from Isaiah and Psalms offer us the assurance of forgiveness and encourage us to repent. We continue with our six-week series focusing on the nativity, infancy, and early childhood narratives of Jesus as recorded in Matthew and Luke.*

### **The First Lesson is from Isaiah chapter 40 verses 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.*

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak 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.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out:  
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every 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.

<sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has  
spoken."

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Get 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!"

<sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup>He 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.

The Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God**

## **PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**

*Righteousness shall prepare a pathway for God. (Ps. 85:13)*

<sup>1</sup>You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;  
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>You have forgiven the iniquity of your people  
and blotted out all their sins.

<sup>8</sup>I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;  
for you speak peace to your faithful people  
and to those who turn their hearts to you.

<sup>9</sup>Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,  
that your glory may dwell in our land.

<sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

<sup>11</sup>Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,  
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,  
and our land will yield its increase.

<sup>13</sup>Righteousness shall go before the LORD  
and shall prepare for God a pathway.

## **The Second Lesson is from 2 Peter chapter 3 verses 8-15a**

*This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.*

<sup>8</sup>But do 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. <sup>9</sup>The 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.

<sup>10</sup>But 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. <sup>11</sup>Since 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, <sup>12</sup>waiting 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? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. <sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The Word of the Lord.

**C    Thanks be to God**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**1 Time Before the Gospel**

**1 Time after the Gospel**

## Holy Gospel: Matthew 1 and Luke 1 and 2 (Selected Verses)

*Three passages of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels give us very limited information about Joseph's engagement to Mary. As we continue to hear the stories of the nativity, infancy, and childhood of Jesus, today we will focus on the couple's engagement, Gabriel's annunciation to Mary, and Mary's visit to her relatives, Elizabeth and Zachariah.*

**Matthew 1:** <sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

**Luke 1:** <sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He 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. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The 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. <sup>36</sup>And 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. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then 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.

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.



**Luke 2:** <sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

**L** The Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to you, O Christ

**SERMON**

Bishop Murray Finck

*“Faithfully Betrothed”*

**CHOIR ANTHEM**

*“All Earth is Hopeful”*

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**L** ... Merciful God,

**C** receive our prayer.

## OFFERTORY

*“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”*

## OFFERING PRAYER

P God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

## THE LORD’S PRAYER

LBW [Green Book] Page 71

## BLESSING

P The God of peace bless us, the love of Christ sustain us in hope, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit + remain upon us now and forever.

C Amen.

## CLOSING HYMN

LBW [Green Book] # 35

*“Hark the Glad Sound!”*

## DISMISSAL

P Let us go in peace, waiting and watching for our Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

**played by organist**

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**Worship Coordinator:** Jerry Brady (714) 534-2673

**Organist:** Sharon Heck

**Flowers are given by:** *No Requests.*

**THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY**

***President:*** Bishop Murray Finck

***Communion Assistant*** Carmen Leslie

***Reader / Prayer Leader:*** Nancy Anderson

***Financial Team:*** Phyllis Mackey and Sylvia Makus

**THIS WEEK**

**Sunday:** 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Communion Service

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Redeemer Finance: November Offering through December 3, 2023**

Budgeted Monthly Expense \$8,341.00

Offering \$3,332.00

Needed to meet expenses \$5,009.00

**CHURCH COUNCIL**

**President** Jerry Brady, **Vice-President** Wendy Alfageme, **Secretary** Nancy Anderson, **Treasurer** Phyllis Mackey, **Finance Chair** Kay Pushman

**Members at Large:** Sandy Langdale, Carmen Leslie, Betty Lucero, Sylvia Makus, Michael Vanvales, and Anne Walshe

## **REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

Jean, Kathy, Wendy, Beverly, Dena, Nancy, Evelyn, Shirlene, Jerry, Dondi, Carol, Mickey, Evelyn, Gloria, Christa, Alice, Barbara, Cedric, Lucy, Karen, Kelly, Raymond, Dick, Marilyn, Brian, Carl, Jessica, Carol, Rose, Ken, Sandra, Elaine, Carmen, Barbara, Betty, Nancy, Phyllis, Sylvia, Gil, Flo, Eileen, Erich, Leslie, Linda, Ronnie, Kay, Violet, Linda, Ron, Collette, Lisa, Patty, Barbara, Joan, Dee, Susan, Anita, Norma, Lathy, Juanita, Clarence, Debbie, Joan, Anne, Doris, Linda, Bruce, Alma, Martha, Marianne, Robert, Laura, Jim, Loretta, Ray, Patty, Delrie, Bill, Betty, Lorna, M. Teresa, Joan, Mike, Frankie, Donna, Ernie, Eileen, Darlene, Sharon, Danota, Lynne, Ethan, Kurt, Brinly, McCall, Kathy, Nayleen, Nicole, Donald, Maria, Andy, Owen, Tom, Anastasia, Claire, Fran, Chris, Kyle, Michele, Bill, Wes, Sam, Kolt, Maeve, Brigid, Joanna, Dale, Karla, Sands, Gloria, Tom, Rosalia, and Wendy. Please contact the church to add people to the prayer list.

*Please pray for our Bishop David Nagler, (ELCA) and Bishop John Taylor (ECUSA), the victims of the Ukrainian/Russian and Israel/Hamas conflicts, and victims and families of all violence and natural disasters.*

*Gracious God, none who trust in your Son can be separated from your love. Give to those who live alone peace and contentment in their solitude, hope and fulfillment in their love of you, and joy and companionship in their relations with others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Announcements

- ✝ Welcome everyone this morning, and especially to our guests and visitors.
- ✝ Thank you to Bishop Murray Finck for Presiding for today's Service. For the next six weeks, he will be exploring with the congregation an in-depth understanding of the nativity, infancy, and childhood of Jesus. We are honored that Bishop Finck will be with us for Sundays through the end of the year.
- ✝ There is a sign-up sheet in the entryway for Poinsettias for Christmas. They are \$8.00 each.
- ✝ There is also a sign-up sheet in the entryway for a cookie exchange we are planning to have on December 24 after our Service.
- ✝ We are again trying to plan an acceptance of new members! Bishop Finck has agreed to accept new members for us so please speak to him. We need to plan a date so please pick up a member's form from the entryway and return it as soon as possible.
- ✝ At this time, we are encouraging people to consider wearing a mask again, especially in Church, due to the spike in Covid-19 cases. Initial symptoms are headache and fever. Please consult with your doctor if you are experiencing these or other symptoms. We continue to have masks available in the entryway for your use. We need to join together to keep everyone safe and healthy.
- ✝ Please take a moment and fill out the attendance slip found in the rack in the pews. Please place it in the offertory plate. Thank you!
- ✝ The NEW Flower Chart is available for sign-ups in the entryway. One bouquet is \$15.00. Both are \$30.00. Please include any dedication for your flower request when signing up or include a note beforehand if there is a dedication.
- ✝ Printed copies of our current newsletter are available in the entryway. It is online on our website at: [www.redeemersealbeach.com](http://www.redeemersealbeach.com). It is sent out via email, if we have your email address. If you are not receiving it, please let us know so we can confirm your address.