



*Loved by God,  
Sent to Serve.*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent  
December 10, 2023**

**Evangelical Lutheran Worship**  
How Does a Weary World Rejoice? © A Sanctified Art

**GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

**Prelude: *Ballade de Jésus-Christ***

**Larry Shackley**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Family of faith, one of the ways we find joy in a weary world is through connection. The prayer of confession is a place of connection with God.

In the prayer of confession we get to come before God with our full, messy, honest selves. And in the midst of that mess, God tells us that we are loved, claimed, and forgiven.

There is no greater joy than that.

So, join me in the prayer of confession, not because you have to, but because you can.

Let us connect with our merciful God.

God of laughter,  
God of open front doors  
and family reunions,  
we confess that we often doubt good news.

**We move through this world  
waiting for the other shoe to drop,  
waiting for life to fall apart,  
waiting for our humanity to get the best of us.**

Instead of leaning into joy,  
we lean into scarcity.

**We lean into fear.**

**We lean into isolation.**

Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared.

**Heal the wounds we have from past hurts,  
and teach us how to throw open our doors like Elizabeth.  
Show us how to find joy in connection. Amen.**

## **Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

How does a weary world practice peace?

**By listening before we speak and saying sorry when we need to.**

By advocating for justice and caring for our neighbor. By practicing Sabbath and forgiving seventy times seven.

**By choosing grace over hate and opening the door for each other.**

There are a million ways to practice peace. So today we light the candle of peace as a reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring peace into a weary world. Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn: *Let My Prayer Rise Up***

**ELW 232**

## **Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Holy God, We know that you are near. We know that you are standing at the door, you are running down the driveway, you are inviting us in — into your Word, into relationship, and deeper into joy. So as we approach your Word, O God, we pray: do not let us pass you by. Do not allow distraction or doubt to get the best of us. Do not let us walk down this road without you. Instead, give us the wisdom to turn and run your way. Give us the wisdom to hear your wisdom, to let it sink into our bones and change us. With hope and gratitude we pray, **Amen.**

## **WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## **Readings**

**Isaiah 40:1-11**

**Luke 1: 24-45**

## **Sermon**

**The Rev. Karla Wildberger**



1 Re - joi - ce, re - joi - ce, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;  
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;  
 3 The saints, who here in pa - ti - ence their cross and suf - f'ings bore,  
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.  
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.  
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.  
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.  
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.  
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;  
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.  
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.  
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.  
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907 Music: Swedish folk tune Public Domain

## Affirmation of Faith

Let us profess our faith together:

**We believe that joy is a sacred gift, existing on a plane deeper than happiness, stemming from the truth that we belong to God.**

**We believe that joy is not meant for isolation. Joy is meant to be shared, weaving us together in laughter and in hope.**

**And when joy feels impossibly out of reach, we believe that part of being sacred community is leaning on one another.**

So together we say:

**I will share my joy when yours runs out. You will share your joy when mine runs out. And in doing so, we will both see God. Amen.**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

...Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

...and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **Amen.**

## **Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## **MEAL**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**Offertory: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming***

**Samuel Wellman**

**Offering Prayer**

(inspired by Matthew 14:15-21)

Let us pray together,

**On my own, what I have to give doesn't amount to much in the light of all you have given to me and in the face of so much need.**

**Put together as a congregation, what we offer you here in love becomes more, not simply added together, but somehow multiplied in its usefulness.**

**We ask you to bless our gifts and with the addition of your blessing, just as it was with the loaves and fishes, there is enough for all.**

**Amen**

~ from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand website. <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/>

## **Invitation**

365 times in scripture we hear the words: "Do not be afraid", not because fear is not real, but because God promises to be present with us. At this table we are invited into the life of God; into community with one another and deeper into joy.

## **Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right to give our thanks and praise for all that we are thankful for.

In these ordinary gifts of bread and wine we receive a sacred gift and affirm that we belong to God. So with the saints before and beside us and with the angels above us, we join our voices together and say:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest!**

Blessed is Jesus, who walks the long and weary road of the world's suffering. On the night of his arrest, Jesus took bread and having blessed it, He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, This is my body, given to you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup having given thanks for it, He shared it with his disciples, saying, This cup is the new relationship with God. Take this and share it. Do this in remembrance of me.

Holy God, pour out your spirit upon this bread and wine, calling us into one body, sharing in your peace. Pour out your spirit on us, weaving us together in laughter and in hope, Sharing with one another in wisdom and joy.

When joy felt impossibly out of reach, Jesus became one of us and broke bread with friend and strangers.

When the weary world cried out for justice and for peace, Jesus came near to us in the offering of this cup.

(Communion liturgy adapted from Ellie Elia @asanctifiedart)

## **Lord's Prayer**

*Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

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**

## Communion Distribution Hymn: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* ELW 254



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788 Music: W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835 Public Domain.

## Post-Communion Prayer

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy, gracious, God, Here at this table your promise of life is made tangible.

**We have rested in the depth of your love;**

**We have tasted your nourishing, nurturing presence;**

**We accept you into our bodies, into our lives.**

**Together, at this table, you have offered us life.**

**Together, by your grace, we accept the life you offer.**

**And we give you thanks. Amen.**

~ posted on Joanna Harader on her **Spacious Faith** blog. <http://spaciousfaith.com/>

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## Announcements

## Benediction

Family of faith, as you leave this place, you go into a weary world—  
so speak tenderly.

Do the good that is yours to do. Choose connection. Hold onto hope.

And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.

You are God's beloved. So go rejoicing. The world needs it.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## Sending Song: *Light Dawns on a Weary World*

ELW 726

1 Light dawns on a weary world when eyes be - gin to  
2 Love grows in a weary world when hun - gry hearts find  
3 Hope blooms in a weary world when crea - tures, once for -

see all peo - ple's dig - ni - ty. Light dawns on a  
bread and chil - dren's dreams are fed. Love grows in a  
lorn, find wil - der - ness re - born. Hope blooms in a

wea - ry world: the prom - ised day of jus - tice comes.  
wea - ry world: the prom - ised feast of plen - ty comes.  
wea - ry world: the prom - ised green of E - den comes.

*Refrain*  
The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;  
the hills and moun - tains shall break forth with sing - ing!  
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,  
as all the world in won - der ech - oes sha - lom.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953, Music: William P. Rowan, b. 1951 Text © 2002 GIA Publications, Inc.  
Music © 2000 William P. Rowan, admin. GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission One License #A-718383

## Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



**Announcements**

**Sweet Fellowship**

Whether you attend the 8:00 or the 10:30 AM service, you are invited to enjoy some sweet fellowship between services. Come early or stay late, grab a cup of coffee and a sweet treat, spend some time visiting with friends, meeting some new friends, or attending an adult education class.

**Altar Flowers** today are provided by Jim & Bernita Gilbertson in memory of Carl & Bea Freymiller.

**This Week at Lord of Life**

Sunday, December 10	8:00 AM	Worship in-person
	9:15 AM	Sunday school; Confirmation; Adult FF
	10:30 AM	Worship in-person or online
	4:00 PM	Christmas in the Barn
Tuesday, December 12	12:00 PM	Dubuque Ministerium @ LOL
	6:30 PM	Council Meeting
Wednesday, December 13	6:00 PM	Holden Evening Prayer Service
Thursday, December 14	6:30 PM	Stephen Ministry

**Wednesday Advent Services: 6:00 pm**

This Wednesday Holden Evening Prayer Service will be sung and the Longest Night service will be on the 20<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to sharing the season with you all in prayer and song.

**Christmas in the Barn**

Join us on this afternoon as we reinstate the Christmas in the Barn 🐄 service at 4:00pm. Ted & Angie Boyle and family 7393 Sundown Road, Peosta, will provide hot chocolate & apple cider. Please bring a plate of cookies to share.

**“The Giving Tree”**

Please consider donating a personal care item/s to our Little Food Pantry during Advent. More information about this appeal is available in the church fellowship area.

## Staff Gift

You are welcome to express appreciation to our paid staff through a monetary gift. Please note “staff gift” on the envelope or check and submit by December 17. Thank you to the dedicated staff who tirelessly support the life of this congregation.

## Prayer List

Kim Barnes  
Linda & Bruce Bothwell  
Ted & Angie Boyle and family  
Kevin & Jennifer Cartee and family  
Mike & Deb Clemens  
Jan Cocayne  
Susan Comer



Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of Lord of Life Lutheran Church. Scan the code to reach our website for further information.

## Worship Online

### Zoom:

<https://bit.ly/2PvSCQJ>  
Meeting ID: 563 582 7371  
Passcode: Luther

### Phone in at:

(312) 626-6799  
Meeting ID: 563 582 7371  
Passcode: 456037

## Worship Servants:

### Sunday, December 10

	Tech	Assisting Min.	Reader	Ushers
8:00 AM			Steve Heer	Dan & Joan Decker
10:30 AM		Diane Frambach	Joe Klinebriel	Tara Grace

### Sunday, December 17

8:00 AM			Susan Hansen	Gilbertsons
10:30 AM			Debbie Thomas	Jerry Merrick

## Acknowledgments

**Cover Art: “Comfort, O Comfort”** by Lauren Wright Pittman | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org Inspired by Isaiah 40:1-11 *Digital painting*

I wanted to create an image that spoke tenderly to the viewer as this text does to the reader. “Comfort, O comfort my people” (Isaiah 40:1). When I’ve read this text before, the shepherding metaphor has only yielded masculine imagery in my mind. It makes sense with the text’s pronouns that I would imagine a masculine figure. It was also ingrained in me—through translations, biblical art, movies, children’s pageants, etc.—that shepherds were always men. I learned recently, however, that women were shepherds too. Some young women were trained and worked as shepherds before they were married; this notion completely added new dimension and depth to the shepherding metaphor. I decided to use imagery of modern-day shepherds to inspire this image. A shepherd is at once fierce and tender, willing to face the most dangerous of predators in the dead of night while warmly cradling the most vulnerable of the flock.

In this image, the shepherd nurtures a lamb while leading the flock through fields of tall grasses and flowers. The fuschia flowers in the foreground are marjoram flowers that represent comfort and the steadfastness of God’s word even in the midst of the leveling of the land. The shepherd’s clothes have repeated medallions with simplified imagery of a straight highway in the wilderness. Within the stylized landscape, a voice proclaims the coming glory of the Lord.

—Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Worship materials created with A Sanctified Art “How Does a Weary World Rejoice?” © A SANCTIFIED ART LLC | SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah Speed A SANCTIFIED ART LLC | SANCTIFIEDART.ORG

Other liturgical elements provided as noted.

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