

✠ MID-WEEK ADVENT ✠

December 2, 2020 – 6:00pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church and School - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

www.ourbethlehem.com

RINGING OF THE BELL

OPENING VERSICLES – PAGE 253ff

L The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

C Amen.

L It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

C to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

L to herald Your love in the morning,

C Your truth at the close of the day.

CONFESSION OF SINS

L I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

C The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins. Amen.

C I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

L The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins.

C Amen.

PSALM 40

P May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;

C **May those who love your salvation say continually,
“Great is the Lord!”**

P I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

C **In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear.**

P Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.

C **I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation; behold, I have not restrained my lips.**

P I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;

C **Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me! O Lord, make haste to help me!**

P May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;

C **May those who love your salvation say continually,
“Great is the Lord!”**

347 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

1 “Comfort, comfort ye My people,
Speak ye peace,” thus saith our God;

3

“Comfort those who sit in darkness,
Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem
Of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover
And her warfare now is over.”

2 Yea, her sins our God will pardon,
Blotting out each dark misdeed;
All that well deserved His anger
He no more will see or heed.
She hath suffered many_a day,
Now her griefs have passed away;
God will change her pining sadness
Into ever-springing gladness.

3 Hark, the herald's voice is crying
In the desert far and near,
Calling sinners to repentance,
Since the Kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet Him
And the hills bow down to greet Him.

4 Make ye straight what long was crooked;
Make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
As befits His holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
Now o'er earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token
That His Word is never broken.

READINGS FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE**Malachi 3:1–5**

“Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. “Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

P This is the Word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God

Luke 1:39–56

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.” And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and

the rich he has sent empty away. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.” And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

P This is the Word of the Lord

C **Thanks be to God**

RESPONSORY

L Into Your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

C **Into Your hands I commend my spirit.**

L You have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth.

C **Into Your hands I commend my spirit.**

L Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

C **Into Your hands I commend my spirit.**

337 The Night Will Soon Be Ending

1 The night will soon be ending;
 The dawn cannot be far.
 Let songs of praise ascending
 Now greet the Morning Star!
 All you whom darkness frightens
 With guilt or grief or pain,
 God’s radiant Star now brightens
 And bids you sing again.

- 2 The One whom angels tended
 Comes near, a child, to serve;
Thus God, the judge offended,
 Bears all our sins deserve.
The guilty need not cower,
 For God has reconciled
Through His redemptive power
 All those who trust this child.
- 3 The earth in sure rotation
 Will soon bring morning bright,
So run where God's salvation
 Glow in a stable's light.
As old as sin's perversion
 Is mercy's vast design:
God brings a new creation—
 This child its seal and sign.
- 4 Yet nights will bring their sadness
 And rob our hearts of peace,
And sin in all its madness
 Around us may increase.
But now one Star is beaming
 Whose rays have pierced the night:
God comes for our redeeming
 From sin's oppressive might.
- 5 God dwells with us in darkness
 And makes the night as day;
Yet we resist the brightness
 And turn from God away.
But grace does not forsake us,
 However far we run.

God claims us still as children
Through Mary's infant Son.

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SERMON

PRAYERS

L Hear my prayer, O Lord;

C **listen to my cry.**

L Keep me as the apple of Your eye;

C **hide me in the shadow of Your wings.**

L In righteousness I shall see You;

C **when I awake Your presence will give me joy.**

L You, O Lord are in the midst of us, and we are called by Your name; do not leave us.

C **Amen**

L Be present, merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of life may find our rest in You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen**

L O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, Lord, in Your mercy grant us a safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at last; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen**

L Be our light in the darkness, O Lord, and in Your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Your only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen

L Visit our dwellings, O Lord, and drive from them all the snares of the enemy; let Your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let Your blessing be on us always; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen

L Eternal God, the hours both of day and night are Yours, and to You the darkness is no threat. Be present, we pray, with those who labor in these hours of night, especially those who watch and work on behalf of others. Grant them diligence in their watching, faithfulness in their service, courage in danger, and competence in emergencies. Help them to meet the needs of others with confidence and compassion; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen

L Abide with us, Lord, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. Abide with us and with Your whole Church, Abide with us at the end of the day, at the end our our life, at the end of the world, Abide with us with Your grace and goodness, with Your holy Word and Sacrament, with Your strength and blessing. Abide with us when the night of affliction and temptation comes upon us, the night of fear and despair, the night when death draws near. Abide with us and with all the faithful, now and forever.

C Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

L Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

C **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.**

BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you.

C **Amen.**

738 Lord of All Hopefulness

- 1 Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy:
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

- 2 Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
Be there at our labors, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

- 3 Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, Your arms to embrace:
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
- 4 Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm:
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

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COMMUNION PRACTICE AT BETHLEHEM – SPECIAL NEEDS

Please note that “**gluten free**” communion wafers are available for those who need them. Please tell the Communion Assistant “**gluten free**” when he approaches you at the Communion Rail.

Also, for those who desire, **highly diluted wine** is available in individual cups (one drop of wine in the cup of water). Please tell the Communion Assistant “**clear**” when he approaches you at the Communion Rail.