

SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
4856 WAYNE ROAD
CHAMBERSBURG, PA 17202
(717) 267-2266

EMAIL: info@solomonslutheran.org
WEB SITE: www.solomonslutheran.org
FACEBOOK SEARCH: Solomon's Lutheran Facebook



"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 10, 2023

December 10, 2023
Second Sunday of Advent

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

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

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are 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.

Hear these words of assurance:
God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.
In the tender compassion of ✠ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Prepare the Royal Highway* (ELW 264)



- 1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
- 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
- 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
- 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

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.

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (VERSE 2)



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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 hurt or destroy over all the earth.
Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM *A Prayer for Peace*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from Isaiah.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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

(sung responsively between choir and congregation, beginning with the choir)



¹You have been gracious to your ¹land, O LORD;
you have restored the good for- ¹tune of Jacob.

²**You have forgiven the iniquity ¹of your people
and blotted out ¹all their sins.**

⁸I will listen to what the LORD ¹God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their ¹hearts to you.

⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to ¹those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell ¹in our land.**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have ¹met together;
righteousness and peace have ¹kissed each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up ¹from the earth,
and righteousness shall look ¹down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed ¹grant prosperity,
and our land will ¹yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go be- ¹fore the LORD
and shall prepare for ¹God a pathway.**

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from 2 Peter.

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.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Refrain — All



There is a long-ing in our hearts, O Lord, for you to re -
veal your - self to us. There is a long-ing in our
hearts for love we on - ly find in you, our God.

Reprinted under OneLicense #A-719004. All rights reserved

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

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.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *Light two Candles!*

HYMN OF THE DAY *Comfort, Comfort Now My People* (ELW 256)



1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.
Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum - ble fa - vor.
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre pseumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

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.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH (*Please respond.*)

P: Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERTORY *Melody to Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

(Sung in Unison)

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.

OFFERING PRAYER

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.
Amen.

GREAT 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 our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



*San - to, san - to, san - to, oh Dios del u - ni - ver - so:
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of might and mer - cy,*

*. . . lle - nos es - tán el cie - lo y la tie - rra de tu glo - ria.
your glo - ry fills all heav - en and earth. . . . You are ho - ly, God.*

*Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en nom - bre del Se - ñor. . . .
. . . Bless - ed be the Sav - ior, the one who comes in your name.*

*Ho - san - na en el cie - lo. San - to_e - res, oh Dios.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. You are ho - ly, God.*

Text: Traditional; English text, hymnal version
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional
English text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

Duplication in any form prohibited without securing permission from copyright administrator or reporting usage under valid license.

Reprinted under OneLicense #A-719004. All rights reserved

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

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

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.
Come, take your place at the table.

COMMUNION

Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you.

COMMUNION SONG (sung twice)



Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name;



Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name.

Text: Dennis Jernigan, refrain of "You are my all in all"
Music: ALL IN ALL, Dennis Jernigan

Text and music © 1991 Shepherd's Heart Music, Inc., admin. Dayspring Music, Inc. (BMI). All rights reserved. International © secured.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

USED BY PERMISSION. CCLI #11066173

HYMN DURING COMMUNION *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* (ELW 631)



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -



faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,



pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



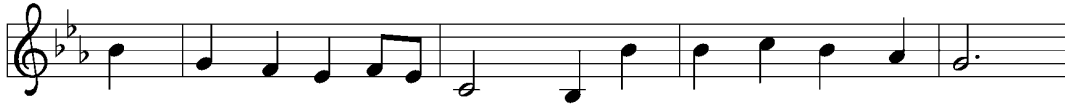
thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

POST COMMUNION



1 O Lord, now let your ser - vant de - part in heav'n-ly peace,
2 Then grant that I may fol - low your gleam, O glo - rious Light,



for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:
till earth-ly shad - ows scat - ter, and faith is changed to sight;



a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,
till rap-tured saints shall gath - er up - on that shin-ing shore,



the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
where Christ, the bless-ed day - star, shall light them ev - er - more.

Text: Ernest E. Ryden, 1886–1981, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis
Music: KUORTANE, Finnish folk tune
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous God,
in bread and cup you have revealed your glory
for all people to see together.
Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *Hark, the Glad Sound!* (ELW 239)



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751

Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

SENDING IN SERVICE

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained from ONELICENSE with license #A-719004. All rights reserved.

SERVING TODAY

Interim Pastor	Pastor Michael Allwein
Cell Phone Number	717-357-3814
Email Address	mallwein211@gmail.com
Church Office Email Address	<u>office@solomonslutheran.org</u>
Organist	Doug Mummert
Head Usher	Janice McEntire
Acolyte	Sarah Aldrich
Lector.....	Patricia Yetter
Securing Offering.....	Janice McEntire & Ron Coldsmith
Communion Set-Up.....	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Clean-Up	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Bread	Peggi Norman
Communion Assist.....	Marjorie Dale & Peggi Norman
Attendance last Sunday.....	45

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the Glory of God in loving memory of my parents Nelson and Anna Brooks given by Linda Berberich.

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

Prayer requests for the following: *Tim Tweedy, Missy Moreui, Becky Ensinger, Ron Bunting, Rose Wishard, Bobby Seilhamer, Sam Mull, Lilly Chiado, Bernie Harris, Phyllis Brehm, Catherine Plummer, Bonnie Hudson, Marty Wenger, Virginia Detwiler, Callie Mummert, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Jim & Carole Darr, Beth Floyd, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Tina Smith, Patricia Yetter, Nancy Marshall, Darrell Veilleux, Linda Wepking, Bill and Jane Brindle, Esther Gift, Jean Jackson, Marjorie McMullin, Joe Mock, Ina Shreiner, Genny Grant, Frances Kramer, Linda Russ, Carol Locke, Betty Amt, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Please Be Aware:** *If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.*

Weekly Calendar Reminders:

December 10 - Choir Practice after church fellowship center
13 - Christmas Decorating 6:30PM
21 - Choir Practice 7PM

Christmas Party Luncheon – today after church in the Fellowship Center.

If you are not taking your altar flowers home, please let Kathy Bowen know to whom or to where you would like them donated. Thanks.

If you are in need of pastoral care, please notify Pastor Mike Allwein at 717-357-3814.

Sunday Morning Bible Study - Pastor Mike 's Bible study is held every Sunday, beginning at 9:00am. We conclude at 9:50, in order to prepare for worship. We look at one of the Scripture texts for the following Sunday. If you cannot join us every week, please join us when you are able! The Bible is our Book of Faith!

Copies of today's sermon can be found in the office room at the rear of the worship space. Pick one up before service if this will be helpful in hearing the sermon; or, pick one up to take home if you wish to use it reflect on throughout this upcoming week.

There are still copies of Pastor Mike's book of "*Musings*." If you have not yet gotten one, please pick one up from the Sunday School room before leaving church this morning.

Thanks to the families of Solomon's, that graciously consented to purchase new candelabras with money from their loved one's memorial. The new candelabras will be used for the first time on Christmas Eve.

We now have the old candelabras and glass globes available for anyone. They will be available Sunday, December 10th through Sunday, December 17th in the Conference Room in the Fellowship Building. Help yourself for memories.

Communion Cards – to maintain accurate records, we ask that each member fill out a communion card **only once per calendar year**, at a service when you partake of Holy Communion.

The 2024 Chart for Altar flowers is in the office to the left when entering the front door of the sanctuary. The cost of the two vases will be \$50.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$50.00 with the bulletin information.

Solomon's Christmas Tree and mailbox is in the Sunday School Room. Place a Christmas Card in the mailbox. Cards will be placed on the tree.

The 2024 contribution envelopes are in your church mailbox.

Spiritrust Lutheran Chambersubrg Auxiliary is inviting all to participate in the annual Angels of Love Christmas Tree. A contribution of \$10 per person will dedicate an angel for the tree in honor or memory of a friend, family or loved one. The tree will be located in the lobby at the Inn at Luther Ridge. Funds raised will help provide care to those who can't pay and other needs at Luther Ridge and in the community. Pamphlets are located at the mailboxes. Any questions or to turn in your contribution see Becky Pecha. We appreciate your contributions.

Power Pack Meals: The need for nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need starting in September. Please consider donating individual serving size fruit and vegetable cups, individual packages of mac-n-cheese, Chef Boyardee, 8 oz bottles of water, juice boxes, and yahoo chocolate drink. Monetary donations are accepted as well, please write "power pack meals" in the memo of your check.

DECEMBER 10, 2023
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

God brings peace and forgiveness.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 1:1-8	The beginning of the good news
Monday	Isaiah 40:1-11	Comfort my people
Tuesday	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Promise of the Lord's coming
Wednesday	Matthew 5:9	Blessed are the peacemakers
Thursday	Psalm 29	The voice of God in a storm
Friday	Isaiah 52:7-10	Let Zion rejoice
Saturday	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	A prayer for God's peace
Sunday	John 1:6-8, 19-28	John's witness to the light

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 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. Isaiah 40:1-2 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, help us to rely on you above all things that our lives may find rest and peace through Christ Jesus, the Son of God. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for this food; we pray for a fair distribution of the fruit of the earth that all may have enough to eat. In Jesus' name, amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the steadfast love and faithfulness of God give you peace. (Psalm 85:10)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Think or talk about a time when you experienced peace.
- When have you felt God's peace in your life?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

He Came Down



DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 1:1-8.

The first line in Mark, *“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,”* serves as a title for the entire gospel writing. That title and that announcement of good news is the source of all the peace we can want. Mark’s Gospel does not present a peace that is simply life without struggles. The peace of God that comes with the good news of Jesus involves struggle, cleansing, and letting go of one’s own innocence or purity. The peace that Jesus brings, and John the Baptist introduces, involves a *“repentance for the forgiveness of sins”* (v. 4). The peace that Jesus brings—and continues to bring throughout our lives—is the freeing power to let go of an understanding of being able to make it on one’s own or of being better than others. Worship services often begin with statements of confession and forgiveness. This offers a peace where we need not hide from the hurts and brokenness of our lives and world. It is the peace that rests on the goodness of God in Christ for us and for all.

Discuss: How does confession and forgiveness give you peace?

Pray: **God of steadfast love and faithfulness, we thank you for coming to us again and again that we may know your forgiving power and have peace through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you extend the peace of God to someone?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The scripture readings during Advent point to Jesus. This week we light two candles on the Advent wreath. The second candle is the candle of peace. Think or talk about how the words of Psalm 85, a prayer for restoration, bring us peace: *“Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.”*

Light the first candle of hope and the second candle of peace and say: ***“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”*** (John 1:5)