

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
6881 S. 51st Street • Franklin, Wisconsin
Pastor Brian Adams
Member of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod (WELS)

Welcome to Worship



It seems that the Advent Wreath originated a few hundred years ago among the Lutherans of eastern Germany. A wreath of evergreens, made in various sizes, was either suspended from the ceiling or placed on a table. Four candles representing the four Sundays of Advent were fastened to the wreath. Eventually the use of the Advent Wreath became wide spread and moved also from the home into the church. The general symbolism of the Advent Wreath lays in the growing light of the wreath, increasing each week as we approach the birthday of Jesus, the Light of the world.

The first candle is called the *"Prophecy Candle."* It reminds us that the promise of Jesus' birth had been foretold to the world for many centuries before it happened by God's prophets. The second candle is called the *"Bethlehem Candle."* God had told his people that the birth of the Savior was going to happen in a very small town called Bethlehem. The third candle is called the *"Shepherd Candle."* The birth of Jesus was first announced to the Shepherds. We are also reminded that Jesus is the Great Shepherd who continues to take care of his flock. The fourth candle is called the *"Angel Candle."* Angels played a large role in the announcing of Jesus' birth. They will also play a role in Jesus' second coming at the end of this world.

Through word and song, we celebrate the coming of Jesus' birth as we look at the meaning behind the Advent Wreath.

The Worship Service

Pre-service Music..... "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"
"The King Shall Come"
Junior Handbell Choir

Welcome.....by Pastor

The Opening Hymn.....Sung to the tune of Christian Worship #592

**All: As angels joyed with one accord Upon the advent of our Lord,
So laud we all and bless the name Of him who from the Father came.
He came, not clothed in majesty Nor pow'r that suits his deity.
In lowly state he walked till he In dying set us captives free.**

Women:

**This done, he soared to God's right hand, Yet orphaned not his chosen band,
For he, not bound in grace and pow'r Attends his own each day and hour.
In ev'ry age—let praise abound—He comes, we hear his voice resound.
His glorious gospel does not cease To bring us comfort, joy, and peace.**

Men:

**He comes in water to the child And cleanses it, from birth defiled.
This washing seals his pard'ning grace And shows the Father's kindly face.
He comes to us in bread and wine To give himself—and gifts divine.
Oh, praise him for this sacrament, Redeeming love's great testament!**

**All: Lift up your heads! All grief and pain Shall vanish when he comes again.
Where we shall see him face to face, There joy alone shall have a place.
All praise to you, eternal Son Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore And Holy Spirit evermore.**

Please Rise

The Invocation

P: In the name of God the Father, who promised to send a Redeemer to crush the power of the devil and restore us to the joy of his presence:
C: Father, we praise and worship you.
P: In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whose birth was announced by angels, and whose life and death restored us to the Father:
C: Lord Jesus, we praise and worship you.
P: In the name of the Holy Spirit, who brings us to faith and nourishes us through Word and Sacrament to keep us in that faith:
C: Holy Spirit, we praise and worship you. Amen.

Please be Seated

Anthem “Call to Advent”
By Senior Choir

*O come, O come Emmanuel. And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lowly exile here Until the Son of God appears. Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel. Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand; Ponder nothing earthly minded,
For, with blessing in His hand, Christ our God to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand. O come, O come Emmanuel,
Let all mortal flesh keep silence, And with fear and trembling stand.
Ponder nothing earthly minded, For, with blessing in His hand,
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Please Rise

The Prayer for the Day

- P:** Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C:** *(Spoken)* Amen.

The Confession of Sins

- P:** Even as John preached a baptism for repentance to the people of Judea, so we are daily called to acknowledge before the Lord our sins and sinfulness. In his love for us, God gives us the power to repent and to become the sons of God.
- C:** **Father, I confess my sinfulness. Not all my crooked places have been made straight, nor all my rough places plain. With my life, my thoughts, my heart, I have many times said "No" to you. I have gone my own way. I have turned my back on you and on those around me. I am not worthy of your love. I am not prepared to receive you. And yet you come to me. You sent your only Son to die for me. In his resurrection you have given me life. In him I trust.**
- P:** For the sake of your great mercy, O Lord, forgive us. Spare us the just punishment our sins deserve according to your promises declared to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.
- C:** **And grant that for his sake, we may live sober, upright and godly lives to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

**All: à Far off I stand with tearful eyes
Nor dare to lift them to the skies.
But you can all my anguish see—
O God, be merciful to me!**

Sung to the tune of Christian Worship #16

The Announcement of Forgiveness

- P:** How great is the love of our God! What great joy is ours — to know that in Christ, through his cross and empty tomb, we are freely and fully forgiven. We have seen and know the salvation of our God. And so as the Lord's spokesman, I proclaim to you that your sins have been forgiven. Though they are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. The Lord has done great things for us, of which we are glad!
- P:** In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

**All: à Praise God the Father and the Son
And Holy Spirit, three in One,
As was, is now, and so shall be
Forever and eternally!**

**And when, redeemed from sin and hell,
With all the ransomed souls I dwell,
My joyous song shall ever be:
God has been merciful to me!**

Sung to the tune of Christian Worship #16

Please be Seated

1. The Prophecy Candle

The Prophecy Candle

- P:** Today we celebrate the coming of Christ, the Light of the world. The candles of our Advent wreath bear witness to that light, and brighten this time of celebration. The first candle, the Light of Prophecy, reminds us of the marvelous promises fulfilled in Christ our Savior.
- C:** **Arise, shine, for your Light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. (Isaiah 60:1-3)**

The Response “The People that in Darkness Sat”

**à The people that in darkness sat A glorious light have seen;
The light has shone on them who long
In shades of death have been, In shades of death have been.**

**Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray, And make us yours alone,
For you are with the Father and The Spirit ever one, The Spirit ever one.**

**Scripture Reading & Talk Jeremiah 33:14-16
It's Coming!**

¹⁴"The days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. ¹⁵"In those days and at that time, I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness.'

**Anthem "Lord of the Stars"
Sung by Junior Choir & Grade 2**

*Lord of the stars, the sun, the moon, the midnight sky.
Lord of the earth, the lands, the seas, the air.
We have heard the prophecies of Your miraculous birth.
When will You come to us? When will You come to us?
O come, O come, Emmanuel. O come to us, O come to us.
Lord of the stars, the sun, the moon, the midnight sky,
Lord of the starry sky. Lord of the earth, the lands, the seas, the air.
Lord of the earth, the air, We have heard the prophecies of Your miraculous birth.
When will You come to us? When will You come to us?
O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to us, shall come to us, shall come to us.*

2. The Bethlehem Candle

The Bethlehem Candle

P: The Bethlehem candle takes us to the place where God gave the world His greatest Gift. Over that little town a bright star would shine, guiding some very wise men to their Savior. That light still beckons us to follow.

C: **But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times. (Micah 5:2)**

**The Response "O Little Town of Bethlehem"
Christian Worship #65, verses 1 & 4**

All:
**à O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep And dreamless sleep The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears Of all the years Are met in thee tonight.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin And enter in; Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, Abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!**

**Scripture Reading & Talk Micah 5:2-5
A Big Task for a Small City!**

² "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." ³ Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor gives birth and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. ⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. ⁵ And he will be their peace. When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men.

**Anthem "Promised Fulfilled"
Sung by Grades K-8; Accompanied by Lyle Timm & Joey Cummings**

*The King shall come, that was God's Word promised of old, to all who heard
 The stump of Jesse a righteous branch will grow
 Who will bring peace from the Father to His children here below.
 The King shall come, our Savior dear the time fulfilled, Jesus is here!
 True God from all eternity is born
 God in the flesh now has come into the world on Christmas morn.*

*The King shall come, let all awake prepare your hearts, your lamps now take,
 For like a bridegroom your Master soon draws near
 To welcome home to the wedding feast the bride He loves so dear.*

3. The Shepherd Candle

The Shepherd Candle

P: The third candle, referred to as the Shepherd candle, is a witness to the truth that the Light of Christ is for all people. No matter how poor or lowly one might be, that light of salvation in Christ envelops him.

C: **And the angel said unto them: "Fear not. For behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10,11)**

The Response

**à To shepherds as they watched by night
 Appeared a host of angels bright;
 "Behold the tender babe," they said,
 "In yonder lowly manger laid.**

**Oh, then rejoice that through his Son
 God is with sinner now at one;
 Made like yourselves of flesh and blood,
 Your brother is th'eternal God.**

Christian Worship #53, verses 1 & 3

Scripture Reading & Talk Psalm 95:6-7

The Joy of the Shepherds

⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; ⁷ for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

4. The Angel Candle

The Angel Candle

P: When the angels sang their magnificent chorus that first Christmas night the light of God's own glory brightened the darkened skies. The Angel candle still speaks this glorious message: "Come and worship Christ, the new-born King!"

C: **And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."** (Lk 2:13,14)

Response

**à Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
 And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains,
 Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

Christian Worship #63, verse 1

Scripture Reading & Talk Matthew 25:31

It's All About the Coming!

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

Anthem "A Light Will Shine"

Sung by Senior Choir

*The people who walk in the darkness, they will see a great light!
 The people who walk in the darkness, on them a light will shine!
 Those who live in the shadow of death will be filled with joy!
 And unto them will a child be born, heaven's gift: a baby Boy.
 Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
 From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
 Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;
 Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.
 The people who walk in the darkness, The people who walk in the dark,
 They will see a great light. They will see a great light!*

*The people who walk in the darkness, The people who walk in the dark,
A light will shine; on them a light will shine!*

The Offering & Offering Prayer

Please Rise

The Responsive Prayer

- P:** Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent’s head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior.
- C:** **We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**
- P:** As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.
- C:** **Move us to take to heart the words of John: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”**
- P:** You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.
- C:** **Fill our lives with the message of your peace and the music of your grace.**
- P:** Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.
- C:** **Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.**
- P:** Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.
- C:** **Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

All: **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.**

The Blessing

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.



The Closing Hymn “O Little Town Of Bethlehem”
Christian Worship #65, verse 3

**How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts To human hearts The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin
Where meek souls will Receive him still, The dear Christ enters in.**

Service Participants

- Worship Leader..... Pastor Brian Adams
- Organist/Youth Handbells..... Miss Heather Schmidt
- Junior/Senior Choir Director Mrs. Marie Becker
- Piano Joey Cummings
- Guitar Mr. Lyle Timm

Upcoming Holiday Worship Schedule

Christmas Children Services

- December 23rd – 6:30pm
- December 24th – 4:30pm

Candlelight Christmas Service

- December 24th – 10:00pm

Christmas Day Service

- December 25th – 10:00am

New Year’s Eve Service

- December 31st – 6:30pm