

He will save
his people

*from
their
sins.*

Matthew 1:21



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Star of
Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, December 22, 2019 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of ADVENT

Theme of the day: What's the best way to prepare for his coming? It's not with frantic doing. It's not with a focus on what we have done or promise to do. It's not with how we will pay back what he comes to bring. The best preparation for Christmas is a *readiness to receive*.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

OPENING HYMN: # 702 “Prepare the Royal Highway”

(sheet music on back page)

♪ **Prepare the royal highway;
The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory
Foretold in sacred story:
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!**

**God's people see Him coming:
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you!
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!**

**Then fling the gates wide open
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him!
All nations, now adore Him!
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!**

Please stand for last verse:

**His is no earthly kingdom;
It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kindness, so abounding:
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!**

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: **And also with you.** *(spoken)*

M: A voice says, "Cry out."

C: And I said, "What shall I cry?"

M: All men are like grass.

C: And all their glory is like the flowers of the field.

M: The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the Lord blows on them.

C: Surely the people are grass.

M: The grass withers and the flowers fall,

C: But the word of our God stands forever.

**C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful,
and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and
actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good.
For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity.
But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior
Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

Organist plays introduction (Melody of #89)

♪ **O Jesus, Lamb of God, you are
My comfort and my guiding star;
I come, a sinner, trustingly
And bring my many sins with me.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given
his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore,
as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all
your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy
Spirit.

C: (Spoken) Amen

M: In the peace of forgiveness let us praise the Lord:

♪ **Help me to change my ways, O Lord,
And gladly to obey your Word.
While here I live, abide with me,
Then take me home eternally.**

Prayer of the Day

M: Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of
our sin and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we
may receive you in joy and serve you faithfully, for you live and
reign with the Father and the Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen. (spoken)

Please be seated.

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING INTROIT

♪ **Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,
And see what in the manger lies.
Who is this child, so young and fair?
It is the Christchild lying there.**

M: The darkness of sin and unbelief are shattered by the light of the Gospel. The **Prophecy Candle** gives us the first flicker of hope as we watch for the coming of the Lord.

C: Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. (Mark 13:33)

The Prophecy Candle is lit.

M: The **Bethlehem Candle** calls us to repent. See in Jesus the Light of the world. Change your hearts so that you may live as children of the light.

C: "Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him."
(Matthew 3:3)

The Bethlehem Candle is lit.

M: The **Shepherd Candle** points to our joy as God's people. In Jesus we have all that matters. In joy and peace we ask God to keep us in the faith and faithful in our lives.

C: The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.
(1 Thessalonians 5:24)

The Shepherd Candle is lit.

M: The **Angel Candle** shows us the glory of the Son of God who humbled himself to save us. With the angels, we praise our Savior who gave his all for us.

**C: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace to men on whom his favor rests."**
(Luke 2:14)

The Angel Candle is lit.



♪ Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery
That you might share your joy with me.

M: May the light of these candles call to mind the glorious light of the Gospel, shining in the birth of our Savior. May his grace enlighten our lives, both now and forever.

♪ Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled
Within my heart, made clean and new,
A quiet chamber kept for you.

FIRST LESSON: Romans 1:1-7

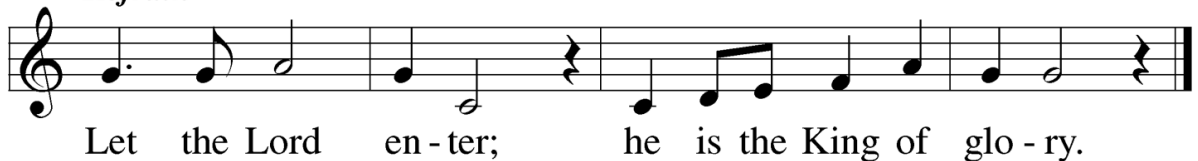
Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised in advance through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. ³This gospel is about his Son—who in the flesh was born a descendant of David, ⁴who in the spirit of holiness was declared to be God’s powerful Son by his resurrection from the dead—Jesus Christ, our Lord.

⁵Through him we received grace and the call to be an apostle on behalf of his name, to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, ⁶including you, who were called by Jesus Christ.

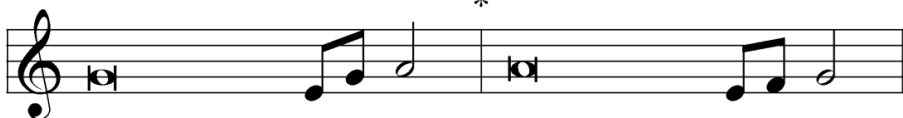
⁷To all those loved by God who are in Rome, called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 24

Refrain



Psalm tone



**The earth is the LORD'S, and everything in it,*
the world, and all who live in it;**

**for he founded it upon the seas*
and established it upon the waters.**

Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?*
Who may stand in his holy place?

**He who has clean hands and a pure heart,*
he will receive blessing from God his Savior.**

Refrain

**Lift up your heads, O you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,*
that the King of glory may come in.**

Who is this King of glory?*
**The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.**

**Lift up your heads, O you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,*
that the King of glory may come in.**

Who is he, this King of glory?*
The LORD Almighty—he is the King of glory.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

M: Alleluia. Alleluia. The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel. Alleluia! (Matthew 1:23)

C: **♫ Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother, Mary, was pledged in marriage to Joseph. Before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her privately. ²⁰But as he was considering these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

²²All this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³“Look, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son. And they will name him Immanuel,” which means, “God with us.”

²⁴When Joseph woke up from his sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. He took Mary home as his wife, ²⁵but he was not intimate with her until she gave birth to her firstborn son. And he named him Jesus.

HYMN: # 36 “A Great and Mighty Wonder”

**♫ A great and mighty wonder, A glorious mystery:
A virgin bears an infant Who veils his deity.**

***Refrain:* Repeat the hymn again:**

“To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men.”

**The Word becomes incarnate And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems To shepherds from the sky.**

Refrain

**While thus they sing your monarch, Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, O vales and mountains, And oceans, clap your hands.
*Refrain***

**Since all he comes to ransom, By all be he adored,
The infant born in Bethl'em, The Savior and the Lord.
*Refrain***

**All idols then shall perish And Satan's lying cease,
And Christ shall raise his scepter, Decreeing endless peace.
*Refrain***

SERMON: Isaiah 7:10-14

¹⁰The LORD spoke to Ahaz again. He said, ¹¹“Ask for a sign from the LORD your God. Ask for it either in the depths below or in the heights above.” ¹²But Ahaz responded, “I will not ask. I will not test the LORD.”

¹³So Isaiah said:

Listen now, you house of David. Is it not enough for you to test the patience of men? Will you test the patience of my God as well? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign for all of you. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel.

Please stand.

APOSTLES' CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

**He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right
hand of God the Father almighty.**

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit;
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Please be seated.

HYMN # 54 “Where Shepherds Lately Knelt”

**♪ Where shepherds lately knelt and kept the angel’s word,
I come in half-belief, a pilgrim strangely stirred;
But there is room and welcome there for me,
But there is room and welcome there for me.**

**In that unlikely place I find him as they said:
Sweet newborn Babe, how frail! and in a manger bed,
A still, small voice to cry one day for me,
A still, small voice to cry one day for me.**

**How should I not have known Isaiah would be there,
His prophecies fulfilled? With pounding heart I stare:
A child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,
A child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.**

**Can I, will I forget how Love was born, and burned
Its way into my heart unasked, unforced, unearned,
To die, to live, and not alone for me,
To die, to live, and not alone for me?**

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD’S PRAYER

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.

M: 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.

C: ♪ Amen. Amen. Amen.

HYMN: # 277 “God, We Praise You” (verses 3,4)

♪ **Jesus Christ, the King of glory,
Everlasting Son of God,
Humble was your virgin mother,
Hard the lonely path you trod:
By your cross is sin defeated, Hell confronted face to face,
Heaven opened to believers, Sinners justified by grace.**

**Christ, at God’s right hand victorious,
You will judge the world you made;
Lord, in mercy help your servants
For whose freedom you have paid:
Raise us up from dust to glory; Guard us from all sin today.
King enthroned above all praises,
Save your people, God, we pray.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWERS for today’s service were given to the glory of
God by Alice and Morris.

PRAYERS Pray for: Gordon Hillberg, Shawn Lozano, John Velasques, Ruth Fabian, little Elias, Albert Nunez, Judy & Jim Moore, Shawna Bushey, Rose Marie Hillberg, Atalia (Moore’s grand-daughter), Austin Barnard, Dennis Douglas, Julieanna Saenz, Rylie Lopez, Molly Webb, Jim Moore (Jr.) and family, Bob Ward, and Kathryn Pereira.

THIS WEEK

Today	Living Nativity, 4:00-6:00, Las Posadas after
Tuesday	Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday	Christmas Day Service, 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	Bible Class and Sunday School, 9:00 a.m. Worship , 10:00 a.m.

Prepare the Royal Highway 702



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: Your
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It

King of kings is near! Let ev - 'ry hill and
 own e - ter - nal King! Palm branch - es strew be -
 greet your prom - ised King! Your King, yet ev - 'ry
 comes from heav'n a - bove. His rule is peace and

val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!
 fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring.
 free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, Fore - told in
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall
 All lands, bow down be - fore him! All na - tions,
 So let your praise be sound - ing For kind - ness

sa - cred sto - ry:
 doubt as - sail you! Ho - san - na to the
 now a - dore him!
 so a - bound - ing:

Lord, For he ful - fills God's Word!