



**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

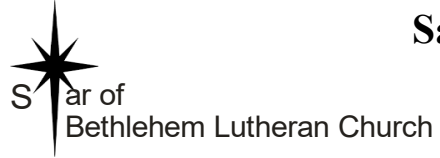
PREPARE
THE WAY
FOR THE LORD,

**MAKE
STRAIGHT
PATHS
FOR HIM.**

ISAIAH 40:3-5



**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**



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Office: 805-937-0339
www.starlutheran.org
Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, December 8, 2024 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of ADVENT

Theme of the day: Since Jesus' coming is sure and so important, he sends out forerunners in the footsteps of John the Baptist who help us to make proper preparation for his coming. They do that with a message not their own. They do it with the message that he himself has given. Pay close attention to those heralds of the coming Lord, the prophets and apostles, and to the pastors and teachers in our midst who have succeeded them to get us ready for his coming.

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: # 308 “There’s a Voice in the Wilderness Crying”

♪ **There’s a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places
where the Lord our God may go!**

**O Christians, you bring good tidings;
get up to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people the coming of their King.
Like the flow’rs of the field they perish;
like grass their works decay.
The pow’r and pomp of nations shall pass like a dream away.**

Please stand for last verse:

**But the Word of our God is eternal;
the arm of the Lord is strong.
He stands in the midst of the nations,
and he shall right the wrong.
He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,
the lambs shall gently hold,
to pastures of peace shall lead them,
and bring them safe to his fold.**

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*)

Confession of Sins

M: God invites us to come into his presence to worship him with
humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our
sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

Song: *CWH #340 “Away in a Manger”*

♪ **Lord Jesus, I long to be cleansed and made whole;
have pardon and mercy upon my ill soul.
By faith, for my cleansing, I see Thy blood flow,
now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

♪ **Lord Jesus, have mercy, my burden is great,
come now, and within me a new heart create;
renew me and guide me; your mercy will show
now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

C: Be gracious to me, God, according to your mercy. Erase my acts of rebellion according to the greatness of your compassion. Scrub me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I admit my rebellious acts. My sin is always in front of me. Against you, you only, have I sinned, and I have done this evil in your eyes. Remove my sin with hyssop, and I will be clean. Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness. Let the bones you have crushed celebrate. Hide your face from my sins. Erase all my guilty deeds. Create in me a pure heart, O God. Renew an unwavering spirit within me.

M: The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. He gives us this great comfort: “As distant as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our rebellious acts from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.” “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.” Therefore, as a called servant of Christ, and by his authority, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

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 Christ Child 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: Watch! Be alert and pray, because you do not know when the 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 of the Lord. Make his paths straight.”
(Matthew 3:3)**

The Bethlehem 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: Malachi 3:1-7

Look! I am sending my messenger! He will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord, whom you are seeking, will come to his temple! The Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight, will surely come, says the LORD of Armies.

²But who can endure the day when he comes? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire, like launderers bleach! ³He will be seated like a refiner and a purifier of silver. He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and like silver. They will belong to the LORD and bring him an offering in righteousness.

⁴Judah and Jerusalem's offerings will be pleasing to the LORD as they were in the days of old, in years long ago.

⁵I will approach you to judge you. I will be quick to give testimony against those who practice occult arts, those who commit adultery, those who swear false oaths, those who cheat workers out of their wages, those who wrong a widow and a fatherless child, those who turn away a resident alien—all those who do not fear me, says the LORD of Armies.

⁶Certainly I, the LORD, do not change. That is why you, sons of Jacob, have not come to an end. ⁷Since the days of your fathers, you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of Armies.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 66

Refrain

At the works of your hands, O Lord, I
lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

Psalm tone

*

Shout with joy to God, all the earth!*
Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious!

Praise our God, O peoples,*
let the sound of his praise be heard.

He has preserved our lives*
and kept our feet from slipping.

Refrain

**Come and listen, all you who fear God;*
let me tell you what he has done for me.**

**If I had cherished sin in my heart,*
the Lord would not have listened;**

**but God has surely listened*
and heard my voice in prayer.**

**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

VERSE OF THE DAY

**M: Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord! Make his paths straight.
And everyone will see the salvation of God. Alleluia.**

(Luke 3:4,6)

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

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 1:3-11

³I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴Every time I pray for all of you, I always pray with joy, ⁵because of your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶I am convinced of this very thing: that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷I am equally convinced that it is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, for both in my chains and in my defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all share in this grace with me. ⁸Yes, God is my witness of how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

⁹And I pray that your love may still increase more and more in knowledge and every insight. ¹⁰This will result in your approval of the things that really matter, so that you will be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

HYMN: # 316 “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

♪ **On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
come, then, and listen, for he brings
good news about the King of kings.**

**Then cleansed be ev’ry life from sin
and furnished for a Guest within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there.**

**We hail you as our Savior, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without your grace we waste away
like flow’rs that wither and decay.**

**Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
and lift us up to fall no more;
O, make your face on us to shine,
and fill the world with love divine.**

**All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won,
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore.**

SERMON: Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene—

²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. ³He went into the whole region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴Just as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

A voice of one calling in the wilderness,

“Prepare the way of the Lord! Make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be made low.

The crooked will become straight, and the rough ways smooth.

⁶And everyone will see the salvation of God.”

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.**

HYMN: # 312 “Comfort, Comfort All My People”

**♪ “Comfort, comfort all my people;
speak of peace,” so says our God.
“Comfort those who sit in darkness,
groaning from their sorrows’ load.
Speak to all Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
tell them that their sins I cover, that their warfare now is over.”**

**All their sins our God will pardon,
blotting out each dark misdeed;
all that well deserved his anger he no more will see or heed.
They have suffered many a day;
now their griefs have passed away.
God will change their aching sadness into everspringing gladness.**

**John the Baptist's voice is crying in the desert far and near,
calling people to repentance for 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.**

**Then make straight the crooked highway;
make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble, ready for his holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is spread abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token that his word is never broken.**

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.

CLOSING HYMN: # 310:3,4 “Arise, O Christian People”

♪ **The humble heart and lowly God raises up on high;
beneath his feet in terror the haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right, that heeds God’s invitation
and makes true preparation — it is the Lord’s delight.**

**Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus; turn not from me aside,
and help me to receive you this blessed Adventide.
From stall and manger low come now to dwell within me;
I’ll sing your praises gladly and forth your glory show.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: Shawn Lozano, little Elias, Dennis Douglas, Bob Ward, George Caravana, Molly Webb & brother Jim, Helen Marten, Doug Ward, Kathy Jones, Art Amarrillas, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Judy Washburn, Marlene Washburn, Terry Oberg’s siblings Linda and Carp, Kathryn Pereira, Helen Cummings, Phil Schaaf, Joe Wilkinson, and Phil Swan.

MEDITATIONS are on the shelf in the narthex. Treat yourself (and maybe someone you know) to this very beneficial devotional resource. There are also *Advent Devotion* booklets to help us get ready for *real* CHRISTmas.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday **Circuit Meeting (Tarzana)**
 ESL, 6:00 p.m.

Thursday **Bible Class, 10:00 a.m.**
 ESL, 6:00 p.m.

Sunday **Sunday School & Bible Class, 9:00 a.m.**
 Worship with Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m.
 Living Nativity, 5:00-6:00 p.m.
 Las Posadas, 6:00 p.m.

COMING UP

Christmas Eve - Candlelight Service, 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Day - Festival Worship, 10:00 a.m.



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