

Second Sunday of Advent

Praise Service



December 10, 2023 ~ 10:00 am

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
HAGERSTOWN, MD

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601 Washington Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740

Pastor Brian McClinton, Senior Pastor

301-733-7550 www.stmarkslc.org

+ Stand if you are able.

PRAISE PRELUDE - "Let the Light In" (PRAISE TEAM ONLY)

Verse 1

It's time for the sleeper to wake
It's time for the old winds to change
I hear the Spirit say it's time

Verse 2

It's time for the dead man to rise
It's time for the Great Light to shine
I hear the Spirit say it's time

Chorus

Fling wide you heavenly gates
Let the King of glory in
Let the King of glory in
Come ride in on Your people's praise
Let the King of glory in
Let the King of glory in

Bridge

Open up the windows
Let the light in
Open up the windows
Let the light in
Open up the windows
Let the light in
Let the light in

ANNOUNCEMENTS

+ MOMENT OF SHARING

+ PRAISE SONG - "Prepare Ye the Way" (PRAISE TEAM ONLY)

Prepare ye the way
Prepare ye the way of the Lord
Prepare ye the way
Prepare ye the way of the Lord

+ CALL TO WORSHIP

Long ago, a voice cried out in the wilderness. Prepare the way for the Lord; make straight the pathways. Something new was about to happen. God would visit His people in a new way!

Lord, open our hearts to receive this good news! Prepare us to be people of great faith and compassion as we look forward to this wonderous event you have proclaimed to us!

+ PRAISE SONG - "Prepare Ye the Way" (ALL SING, 2 Times)

Prepare ye the way

Prepare ye the way of the Lord

Prepare ye the way

Prepare ye the way of the Lord

+ PRAISE HYMN - "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

ELW 242

1 Awake! Awake, and greet the new
morn,
for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,
behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor,
to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heav'nly door
and lives now inside us forever.

2 To us, to all in sorrow and fear,
Emmanuel comes a-singing,
his humble song is quiet and near,
yet fills the earth with its ringing;
music to heal the broken soul
and hymns of lovingkindness,
the thunder of his anthems roll
to shatter all hatred and blindness.

3 In darkest night his coming shall be,
when all the world is despairing,
as morning light so quiet and free,
so warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song,
the lame shall leap in wonder,
the weak be raised above the strong,
and weapons be broken asunder.

4 Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night,
though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light,
be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer
and love our endless story;
may God fill ev'ry day we share
and bring us at last into glory.

+ LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

+ PRAYER

You are the God who gives us peace. Cause us to remember that because of Jesus we can experience a Christmas free of turmoil and chaos. Regardless of our circumstances or our situations, you offer us peace that passes understanding. **AMEN**

+ PRAISE HYMN – “Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”

ELW 240

1 Light one candle to watch for

Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

He shall bring salvation to Israel,

God fulfills the promise.

2 Light two candles to watch for

Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,

gently lead them homeward.

READING - Isaiah 40:1-11

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.

PRAISE HYMN – “Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

ELW 256

1 "Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over;
God will reign in peace forever.

2 For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Valleys, rise to greet the Savior;
hills, bow down in humble favor.

PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13

¹LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
²You forgave the iniquity of your
people; you pardoned all their sin.
⁸Let 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.
⁹Surely his salvation is at hand for those
who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness will
meet; righteousness and peace will kiss
each other.
¹¹Faithfulness will spring up from the
ground, and righteousness will look
down from the sky.
¹²The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
¹³Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.

READING - 2 Peter 3:8-15a

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.

OFFERING INVITATION

In gratitude for all that God have given us, we receive this offering; pledging these gifts and our lives in God's service.

OFFERING

+ OFFERING PRAYER

Lord, we bring these gifts to you, thankful for all the ways you have healed and enriched our lives. May these gifts be used in service to others in Jesus' Name. **AMEN**

+ GOSPEL READING - Mark 1:1-8

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.”

MESSAGE

Pastor Brian

PRAISE SONG – “Hope Has a Name” (PRAISE TEAM ONLY)

There is a song I know it well
A melody that's never failed
On mountains high in valleys low
My soul will rest
My confidence in You alone

Chorus

Hope has a name His name is Jesus
My Savior's cross has set this sinner free
Hope has a name His name is Jesus
Oh Christ be praised I have victory

There is a light salvation's flame
Christ undefeated trampled the grave
See now the cross be lifted high
The light has come the light has won
Behold the Christ

Chorus

There'll be a day my hope complete
Now home in glory Your face I'll see
My pain no more my fear will cease
I bow my life I fix my eyes
On Christ my king
I bow my life I fix my eyes
On Christ my king

Chorus

+ CREED

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

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 into hell. 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

Response: Merciful God, receive our prayer.

+ THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.**

+ PRAISE SONG - "Prepare the Royal Highway"

ELW 264

1 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:

Refrain

Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

2 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!

Refrain

3 Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing:
Refrain

4 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: *Refrain*

+ BLESSING

God is bringing light to our darkness. We are called to go into the world, confident in God's loving presence, to serve others in need. Go, bringing hope and peace to this world. Go in God's love!

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