Advent

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 20, 2020

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH
745 Front Street S., Issaquah, WA 98027
425-392-4169

SERVICE OF THE WORD—FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GATHERING: THE HOLY SPIRIT CALLS US TOGETHER AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

CALL TO WORSHIP *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* — French processional, 15th century Cantor

O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one:
Refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Pastor Jim Kruse

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

PM: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C: Amen.
PM: When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, the Word made flesh, a burst of love and light shining in a world of darkness. Gathered in a season of lengthening shadows, we look to our God who calls us by name.

For we are God's beloved. We are children of the light. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

Therefore, let us live as children of the light. Mindful of our baptism, let us clothe ourselves in the love of Christ and put on the hope revealed to us.

C: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Light Four Candles to Watch for Messiah — Yiddish folk tune Cantor

Light four candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He is coming, tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

PM: Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.
C: With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD: GOD SPEAKS TO US IN SCRIPTURE READING, PREACHING AND SONG.

FIRST READING 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

[1]Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, [2]the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." [3]Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you."

[4]But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: [5]Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? [6]I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. [7]Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" [8]Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; [9]and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. [10]And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, [11]from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. [16]Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

AM: Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING Romans 16:25-27

[25]Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages [26]but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— [27]to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

AM: Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Come, Hope of Unity* — Geoyong Lee, b. 1947 Cantor

Come, Hope of unity, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.

THE GOSPEL Luke 1:26-38

[26]In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, [27]to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. [28]And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." [29]But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. [30]The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. [31]And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. [32]He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. [33]He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." [34]Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" [35]The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. [36]And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. [37]For nothing will be impossible with God." [38]Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

PM: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON *You Had Me At, "Hello"* Pastor Jim Kruse

After having heard this somewhat familiar but still rather strange bit of the Christmas story, I want you to try to put yourself, as best you can, into the mind and heart of Mary. Think with me for a moment about times in your life when you were suddenly overwhelmed or overpowered by something that happened to you. Maybe you felt overwhelmed the first time someone talked you into jumping off the high-dive at the pool when you were a child, or they convinced you to go on the roller coaster with them. It looked like fun. Everyone came out of the water or down the ramp smiling and laughing and chatting about what fun it was. But it was not fun for you at all. You were terrified, and you just want to forget it. Or maybe you felt overwhelmed in high school or college, when you sat down to take a big important test, a test you had been studying for for days. And looked down at the questions and you realized that none of it looked like anything you had ever seen before. It is moment of sheer panic.

I was fifteen years old when our family relocated from Colorado to Hawaii in August, just two weeks before the school year started. And, of course, one of the first things you have to do when you move from Colorado to Hawaii, is to go see the ocean close up. You take a family outing to the beach. And so we did. I sat there on the sand, skin as white a sheet, in my brand-new swimming trunks, staring out at the water as the waves came the waves came tumbling into the shore at a height just slightly taller than I was. I was not afraid, not at first. I was an excellent swimmer and had even earned a Red Cross Lifesaving badge. But all of that swimming had been in pools and lakes where the water was calm and clear. And yet, I had watched the other children, most of whom were much younger and smaller than I was. I watched how they bounced up and down just at the right moment to avoid being drawn into along on the movement of the wave. When I finally ventured out into the water, I thought I was ready.

But then, the first wave came crashing in over my head and I mistimed my jump. The power of the water forced me down and drove my face into the sand. I kicked with my feet and pushed with my arms, but I just couldn't get my head up out of the water. By training or instinct, I do not know which, I just held my breath and waiting for the water to let go, hoping that it would do so before I needed to take another breath. When I finally fought my way back into the beach I just sat there for the rest of the afternoon, grateful to be able to move on my own without being pulled aside by a power greater than my own.

If you can recall times like this, when some sort of wave came washing over you and pulled you down into an overwhelming situation, then you can begin to understand what Mary may have been feeling in the Gospel lesson for today, the Fourth and Last Sunday in Advent.

At the time of this encounter with an angel, Mary was about as ordinary a person as you can be in this world. Although she was young, by our standards, she was most likely a common age of marriage in this ancient society, probably about 14 years old. She was part of a servant class, which in that agricultural world would have seemed quite poor to us. There was no reason for her to expect to live a life that was anything other than physically hard, but otherwise calm and peaceful, and most importantly, uneventful. Suddenly and without warning Mary is struck by three powerful waves.

First of all, an angel shows up out of nowhere. Now we might think that, to the people of the Bible, the appearance of angels was a common occurrence. But there is really no reason to believe that. The appearance of an angel to Mary would have been just as surprising, just as unusual, just as shocking to her then as it would be to us today. And so she was caught off guard by this messenger from God.

Then comes a second wave, which is much like the first. The angel says, "Hello," to Mary in a strange and unusual way, "Kairo, Karito!" The two words translate literally as something like "Joy, O Joyous One!" The English translation we have before us today says, "Greetings, Favored One!" But the words are really not directly translatable into English. The full sense of the words would be more like, "I greet you with an overwhelming sense of joy, you who are the one who embodies joy itself for me." Now this would be a very impressive greeting if you happened to a servant or a child who was meeting someone of prominence. But this greeting makes no sense at all if you are already both a servant and a child and you are being met by a messenger from God himself.

But it is the third wave that is perhaps the most distressing to Mary. The angel begins to tell Mary that she will become pregnant, and that her baby she will carry is of God's own making. And that this child will grow up to become a new King David, one who will save God's people, as David once did, and will rule with peace and love, as God always intended, forever. Having been hit by this third and final wave Mary says what anyone of us would say, "How can this be?" And we would agree, "How can this be?" "How can this be that I am seeing visions of angels? How can it be that this angel honors me with this generous greeting rather than demanding that I honor him? And how can this be that I can become the mother of God when, because of my virginity, I cannot even become the mother of a human child?" "How can this be?

At this moment Mary represents all of us as we suddenly, and without warning, stand face to face with the gracious activity of God in our lives. In her innocence, in her naiveté, in her lack of experience with the ways of the world, she bears our innocence, our naiveté, our lack of experience. "How <u>can</u> this be?" With her confusion and with her lowliness, she is being confused and lowly for us. And in her human fallibility, in the sheer illogical nature of the moment, she is as fallible and illogical as any of us. Really, "How can this be?"

The angel does her best to give an explanation as to what is happening to Mary. The angel talks about the power of the Holy Spirit overshadowing her, and how the pregnancy of her elder cousin Elizabeth is proof that God is behind it all. But these are not the words that convince Mary as to what is going on. These words are too weak, these words are too implausible, to bring out the faithful response that comes from Mary's heart. No, the real power to convince Mary comes right at the very beginning of the story. Mary is convinced by the powerful greeting. "Hello, Mary!" Kairo, Karito," "Joy to You, who give Joy to Me." The angel greets Mary as one who knows that his message is so wonderful, he cannot keep a straight face. It is not Mary who is overwhelmed by the joy of it all, it is the angel. And almost before he opens his mouth, Mary knows. She knows! No further explanation is necessary. "You had me at, 'Hello,'" she is saying. "Here I am, the servant of the Lord, let it be to me according to what you have said."

The things of God that happen in our lives do not have to make sense, we do not have to be able to understand them, to be able to grasp hold of them, to be able to control them, or to feel worthy of receiving them. All we really have to do is let them wash over us and carry us with them.

But it is not easy to respond in this way. That is, until we hear these same words of the angel spoken directly to us at our Baptism, "Kairo, Karito." "Kairo, Karito," "Joy to You, who gives Joy to Me." These works are spoken to us each moment of each day on our journey through life as children of God. "Joy to You, who gives Joy to Me." The same words spoken to us each time we seek forgiveness for our failures, "Joy to You, who gives Joy to Me." The same words are spoken to us each time we break the heart of someone we love. "Kairo, Karito," God never tires of saying it, "Joy to You, who gives Joy to Me."

What else need be said. "You had me at, 'Hello,'"

HYMN OF THE DAY *People Look East* Cantor

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965; Tune: French carol

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flow'r may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather, right as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.
Set ev'ry peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Lord, is on the way.

OFFERING

As you consider how your life has been sustained emotionally, physically and financially, during the challenging events of 2020, please take this opportunity to give your gratitude to God through your generous financial support of the ongoing ministries of Our Savior Lutheran Church.

OFFERING PRAYER

PM: God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

OFFERING SONG *In the Lord* — Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994; Taizé Community Cantor

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice!
Look to God, do not be afraid; lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

Apostles' 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 People

God of power and might, fulfill your promise and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. We continue to pray for those affected by COVID-19. Bring comfort to those who have died; grant healing for those recovering; protect and sustain all care providers; guide those working to develop and distribute a vaccine; and sustain those who are facing financial uncertainty due to loss of income. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence, especially Les, Mayah, Gail, Judy, Jerry, Mary, Ron, Carol, JD, Marlene, Nancy, communities across the country, Dave, Guests of the Community Meals Program, Sonja, Nicole, Josee and Jeannie. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For what and for whom else do the people of God pray this morning?

[Here other intercessions may be offered.]

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of Katharina von Bora Luther and for the bold leadership of female leaders in our own time. Inspire others with their steadfast witness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

SENDING SONG *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* — French processional, 15th century Cantor

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 you, O Israel.

BLESSING

PM: Having been justified by God's grace, you are now heirs of hope – a hope born in a manger. And with this hope, you have been blessed – a hope for all people. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

POSTLUDE Offertory on *Adeste fideles* — Jacob B. Weber and William C. Carl
Jiyoung Lee

Commemorations for the Week

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552, Sunday, December 20
Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty -four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.

Stephen, Deacon and Martyr, Saturday, December 26
Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.

Serving in Worship:

Worship Leader:	Pastor Jim Kruse
Assisting Minister:	Mary Ann Hult
Lector:	Debby Beck
Cantors:	Alice Lewis, Scott Hafso
Flute:	Jan Hazelton
Videographer:	Leslie Waltzer
Video Editor:	Dave Carlson
Banner:	Elaine Stamm
Bulletin Cover:	Brad Marx

Readings for Christmas Eve: Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:1-20

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Our Savior Lutheran Church Staff

Rev. James R. Kruse, *Transition Pastor*
Shari Lundberg, *Parish Administrator*
Dr. Jiyoung Lee, *Parish Organist*
Scott Hafso *Director of Worship & Music*
Kate Gagnon, *Lay Visitation Minister*

Additional worship resources:

Reading: Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26

Suggested Hymn for Listening: *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*
Text & Music: Basque carol

++Share & Prayer ---------- December 20, 2020

Prayer is putting our faith into action. We invite you to include these people in your daily prayers. You can make prayer requests via email at office@oslcissaquah.org. All written requests will remain on this list for 4 weeks.

Carol Harbolt peace and healing. (Ray Harbolt)
Waverly Manner residents and staff (Ray Harbolt)
Les Gagnon peace and healing. (Kate Gagnon)
Mayah healing. (Connie Fletcher)
Gail comfort and peace following cancer diagnosis. (sister of Sandy Aldworth)
Judy Shaffer comfort and peace of mind. (Sandy Aldworth)
Jerry Nack preparing for upcoming surgery for spinal stenosis. (Kate Gagnon)
Mary healing, wholeness, comfort and a clear sense that God is in control. (Marilyn Carlson)
Ron Gerde healing for recent medical issues. (Brother to Bob Gerde)
Carol Johnson ongoing medical issues, and mourning the recent loss of her husband & her brothers. (Mary Fricke)
JD Golick diagnosed with stage 3 stomach cancer, completed one cycle of chemotherapy. (nephew to Patty Gerde)
Marlene Pickering discernment in medical decisions to alleviate pain. (Mary Fricke)
Nancy Cumming peace as she awaits an opportunity to move into Timber Ridge. (Mary Fricke)
Nancy Anderson comfort and healing. (Cheryl Neeb)
Safety and peace for communities being torn apart during these difficult times. (Karen Hansen)
Dave Carlson continued healing and following kidney transplant surgery.
Guests of the Community Meals Program safety, health and peace of mind. (Connie Fletcher)
Sonja 3 years old undergoing treatment for cancer. (granddaughter of Henrik & Patty Christopherson)
Nicole DeCamp healing and strength. (Ken DeCamp and Cheryl Leiter)
Josee Jordan peace of mind as she faces health challenges. (Dianne Tanner)
Jeannie Lindquist continued healing and strength.

Healing and peace of mind: **Henrik & Patty Christopherson** (Dianne Tanner); **Vern Lindquist; Mike Golick** (Patty Gerde); **Marian James; Gregory** (nephew of Joanne Suttmeier); **Doug Patur; Katie Moeller; Margot Inman; Ken Acker** (son of Lucy Acker); **Marilyn Carlson; Taufik Hidayut** (Ken Konigsmark); **Don Wilkinson** (husband of Gwynn Wilkinson); **Rebecca Thomas; Tanisha Foote** (Marilyn Carlson); **Dorothy Soland; Randi Strom; Jeanne Kuipers; John Pass; Florence Kinnune; Carol Harbolt; Sandy Aldworth; Jen Winslow; Larry Pruitt.**

Undergoing cancer treatment: **Les Carlson** (father of Dave Carlson); **Harold Mandt** (brother of Mary Ann Hult and Lorna Robertson); **Chris Howe** (brother of Mark Howe); **Peggy Scalise** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Eileen Letts** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Keith DeCamp** (brother of Ken DeCamp); **Barbara Jones** (mother of Ron Sordahl); **Doug McVety** (Helen Nychay); **Al Batt** (Connie Fletcher); **Larry Harbolt** (Ray Harbolt); **Gerald Welch** (Vern and Jeannie Lindquist); **Christy Williams** (Bill Bergsma); **Dana Mancini** (Jan Setterlund); **Greg Petersen** (Wes Collum); **Barry Donker** (Joan Parish); **Germaine Korum** (Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Kathryn Aitcheson** (Gerrie Hendrickson); **Yuko Takiguchi** (Teiko Soland); **Barb** (Janette Singley)

Living with cancer: **Liz Kidd** (Bob Beck); **Duane Jacobson; Mary Lewis** (sister-in-law of Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Mark Becker** (uncle of Paula Seeger); **Barbara Krogh Jarvis** (sister of Steve Krogh); **Suzanne Lewis** (daughter-in-law of Lyle & Alice Lewis); **Mira Bergsma**

Expectant Mothers: **Alyssa Saavedra** (Cheryl Neeb); **Shawna McIntyre** (Cheryl Neeb)

Mourning the death of loved ones: For peace and comfort during this time of grieving for the family and friends of: **Ray Kruckenberg** (uncle of Dianne Tanner); **Tom Wiese** (Sandy Aldworth); **Talton Johnson** (husband of Carol Johnson); **Jean Stanley** (sister-in-law to Alice Lewis); **Delores "Dee" Bakamus** (Dar Boni); **Marlene Braun** (sister to Cheryl Neeb); **Nikki** (niece to Doug & Dianne Tanner); **Richard "Dick" Birdsall** (Dianne Tanner); **Germaine Korum** (Lyle & Alice Lewis)

Members and friends serving in the military; fire & police departments, & emergency rooms: **Mike** special ops, unexpectedly called up. (nephew of Dave and Marilyn Carlson)

Global Missions and Missionaries: Alexandra, Miriam, and Kati, recipients of our Global Missions Peru Scholarships. Congregations in Chiclayo, Peru: **Pepe** at Las Brisas, **Merci** in San Antonio and **Harold** at Las Lomas. **MaaSae Girls Lutheran Secondary School** in Tanzania.