



Advent Midweek One

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
"A Church for Families, a Family for Everyone"
Sunday, December 7, 2025

ADVENT MIDWEEK 1

Welcome

We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

Tithes and Offerings

Please place your offering in the basket in the aisle. (Our offerings are made as an act of worship, given in loving response to all that God has graciously given us, both materially and spiritually.)

+ PREPARATION +

THEME: “EVERGREENS”

AS WE GATHER: “Prepare!” is often the watchword of the season as the world gets ready for another celebration of Christmas. An integral part of any preparation is decoration. We see decorations everywhere this time of year. The world may not comprehend the real meaning of Christmas, but even secular preparations use many of the same decorations beloved by Christians—an appropriation we shouldn’t mind at all, because these decorations point us to Christ. This year, as we look forward again to the coming of the Messiah, we take a fresh look at how the adornments of the season draw our eyes to Jesus, that we may more richly behold the love, peace, joy, and hope He comes to bring as this beauty is set before us.

Tonight, we focus on evergreens. Perhaps the most innocuous decorations in the eyes of the world, their prickles remind us of the crown of thorns, and the berries of the holly evoke the blood-stained brow of our crucified Lord. Above all, the steadfastness of their green in the midst of death symbolizes life amid death—and the life eternal Jesus won for us on the cross.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

“Arise, O Christian People”

LSB 354

1 A - rise, O Chris - tian peo - ple! Pre - pare your - selves to -
2 Pre - pare the way be - fore Him; Pre - pare for Him the
3 The hum - ble heart and low - ly God rais - es up on
4 Pre - pare my heart, Lord Je - sus; Turn not from me a -

day; Pre - pare to greet the Sav - ior, Who takes your
best. Cast out what would of - fend Him, This great, this
high; Be - neath His feet in ter - ror The haugh - ty
side, And help me to re - ceive You This bless - ed

sins a - way. To us by grace a - lone The
heav'n - ly guest. Make straight, make plain the way; The
soul shall lie. The heart sin - cere and right, That
Ad - vent - tide. From stall and man - ger low Come

truth and light were giv - en; The prom - ised Lord from
low - ly val - leys rais - ing, The heights of pride a -
heeds God's in - vi - ta - tion; And makes true prep - a -
now to dwell with - in me; I'll sing Your prais - es

heav - en To all the world is shown.
bas - ing, His path all e - ven lay.
ra - tion— It is the Lord's de - light.
glad - ly And forth Your glo - ry show.

“Arise, O Christian People”, Text: Valentin Thilo, 1607–62; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, alt., Tune: New Catechismus Gesangbüchlein, 1598, Hamburg, alt., Text and tune: Public domain

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

OPENING SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 40:3b,c, 5; Psalm 118:26

- P** Prepare the way of the LORD;
- C** **make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**
- P** Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!
- C** **We bless you from the house of the LORD.**
- P** And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
- C** **and all flesh shall see it together. 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.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

(Silence as we consider our sinful condition.)

- P** Let us confess our sin together:
- C** **Heavenly Father, we are captive and exiled, choosing our own path away from You. We seek wisdom and knowledge to replace You with our own judgment. Too often we try on our own, but we cannot guide ourselves. Come, Lord Jesus; forgive us and restore us; guide us and deliver us; teach us and renew us. Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** “Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing, bringing news of sins forgiven; Jesus comes with words of gladness, leading souls redeemed to heaven, hope to all the world is given!” By Jesus’ blood and according to His promise, Your sins are forgiven, in the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

SALUTATION

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Lord of all beauty, You made the heavens and the earth; the world and all its fullness are Yours. Thank You for giving us life and filling creation with signs that declare Your glory. As we behold beautiful evergreens this season, fix our eyes on their thorny leaves and red berries that we may give thanks for the crown Your Son wore and the cross He bore for us.

Abide in us always, as we abide in Your Word and take heart in the promise of eternal life with Jesus, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

C Amen.

+ THE WORD +

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Hosea 14:4-8 (ESV)

P A reading from Hosea, the fourteenth chapter.

⁴I will heal their apostasy;

I will love them freely,
for My anger has turned from them.

⁵I will be like the dew to Israel;

He shall blossom like the lily;
He shall take root like the trees of Lebanon;

⁶His shoots shall spread out;

His beauty shall be like the olive,
and his fragrance like Lebanon.

⁷They shall return and dwell beneath My shadow;

they shall flourish like the grain;
they shall blossom like the vine;
their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

⁸O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols?

It is I who answer and look after you.
I am like an evergreen cypress;
from Me comes your fruit.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 92

(cantor – odd verses; **congregation – even**)



- ¹It is good to give thanks | to the LORD,*
to sing praises to Your name, | O Most High;
- ²**to declare Your steadfast love in the | morning,*
and Your faithful- | ness by night,**
- ³to the music of the lute | and the harp,*
to the melody | of the lyre.
- ⁴**For you, O LORD, have made me glad | by Your work;*
at the works of Your hands | sing for joy.**
- ¹¹My eyes have seen the downfall of my | enemies;*
my ears have heard the doom of my evil as- | sailants.
- ¹²**The righteous flourish like the | palm tree*
and grow like a cedar in | Lebanon.**
- ¹³They are planted in the house | of the LORD;*
they flourish in the courts | of our God.
- ¹⁴**They still bear fruit in | old age;*
they are ever full of | sap and green,**
- ¹⁵to declare that the LORD is | upright;*
He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness | in Him.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Revelation 22:1-5 (ESV)

P A reading from Revelation, the twenty-second chapter.

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. ⁴They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P A reading from John, the eleventh chapter.

¹⁷Now when Jesus came, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met Him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You." ²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

“The Holly and the Ivy”

(see insert)

1 The holly and the ivy, when they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood, the holly bears the crown.

**Ref. Oh, the rising of the sun and the running of the deer.
The playing of the merry organ, sweet singing in the choir.**

2 The holly bears a blossom as white as any flow’r,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to be our sweet Savior. **(ref.)**

3 The holly bears a berry as red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to do poor sinners good. **(ref.)**

4 The holly bears a prickle as sharp as any thorn,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ on Christmas Day in the morn.
(ref.)

5 The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all. **(ref.)**

6 The holly and the ivy, when they are both full grown.
Of all the trees that are in the wood, the holly bears the crown. **(ref.)**

SERMON
“POINTING TO CHRIST”

Pr. Jim Sprenkle

“Peace, Peace, Peace”

(tune: *Still, Still, Still*)

Peace, peace, peace - The gift of Christ is peace.
We walk with God, our past forgiven.
All in Him is life and heaven.
Peace, peace, peace - The gift of Christ is peace.

Hope, hope, hope - The light of Christ is hope.
In all our darkness Christ is shining,
Leading upward, faith refining.
Hope, hope, hope - The light of Christ is hope.

Love, love, love - The heart of Christ is love.
On all who come He pours His presence,
Life and love in holy essence.
Love, love, love - The heart of Christ is love.

Joy, joy, joy - We praise You, Christ, with joy!
Our peace, our hope, our love and treasure,
Highest calling, deepest pleasure!
Joy, joy, joy - We praise You, Christ, with joy!

“Peace, Peace, Peace”. Words by Ken Bible, Music: Traditional Austrian Melody; arr. by Ken Bible, © 2006 by LNWhymns.com. CCLI Song #4663940.

ADVENT LITANY

Hebrews 10:25

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For eyes to behold the Father’s hand in all creation, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

- P** For awareness of beauty and the living traditions of the church that bring Christ to our eyes through arts and crafts, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That we may see the signs of Christ's return even as we celebrate His birth, and encourage one another all the more as we see the Day drawing near, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That we may be living testimonies of new life in Christ through our loving service to our neighbor—both in word and in deed, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That we may be thankful for the bountiful harvest we enjoy amid the many festivities of this season, and be generous to the poor, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That we may love one another as God so loved us, forgive one another, and work together in the unity we have in Christ Jesus, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** That we may not be lured into temptation or despair or be distracted by the false Christmases around us, but always hold the true meaning of Christmas in our hearts, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**

CLOSING PRAYER

- P** Lord of life, You sent Your Son to bring back to life all the children of Adam. Grant that we may view the evergreens of this season through the eyes of faith so that in a world still filled with death, we may be of good courage, knowing that, just as the evergreen prevails over death in winter, we prevail over the winter of our sin and will rise to life eternal on the Last Day; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

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.

BENEDICTION

John 15:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

P These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you,
C and that your joy may be full.
P Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our
Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and
good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish
them in every good work and word.
C Amen.

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

LSB 357

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

4 O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. **(refrain)**

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”, Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln;
tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt., Text: Public domain

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2025 Concordia Publishing House.

Ascension Lutheran Church

1440 SE 182nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97233

Office Phone: 503-665-8821 · Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement:

~Go and Share Jesus Christ~

Our Vision Statement:

“Take part...Join Jesus on His mission.”

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God’s witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God— the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God’s Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

STAFF

Rev. Jim Sprengle, Pastor
pastor@alcportland.org

Rev. Ruberto Ek Yah, Pastor
rubastinoek@yahoo.com

Brad Hall, Worship and Music Coordinator
bdhall1982@yahoo.com

Michele Sprengle, Office Administrator
office@alcportland.org

Sheryl Maier, Treasurer
treasurer@alcportland.org

Wanda Cassetty,
Council Secretary
alccouncil1440@gmail.com

Laura Potter, Property Management
alcproperty1440@gmail.com