

**Welcome to Lord of Life
Lutheran Church
December 21, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent**



Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

Welcome: Lord of Life Lutheran Church's long-standing credo is "We share God's Love".

LoL provides a welcoming and safe place for worship, comfort, solace, and reflection. We are called by Jesus to love God and one another: to practice radical hospitality, and to serve all without reservation, stipulations or regard to your race, ethnic background, age, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, socioeconomic position, family status, or where you are in your faith journey. You are a unique and beloved child of God. We welcome you to join us in worship and communion and be part of our commitment to anti-racism, social and economic justice and environmental care.

Worship: *Communion:* All are welcome to share in Holy Communion.

Passing of the Peace: It is ok to greet those sitting near you. Please remember people have different levels of personal space which may vary from day to day and situation to situation. You can be respectful by asking, "May I hug you?" or "Would you like a handshake."

Physical Distancing: It is still important to be aware of distancing. Pews along the sides of the church near the stained-glass windows are for people who want space; please space yourselves accordingly.

Children Welcome: Kids of all ages are welcome in service, and we celebrate their joyful wiggles and giggles! There are kids bags in the back of the sanctuary.

*Information, service & liturgy instructions are shown in italic or **bold italic** type on the following pages.*

Portions of the liturgy spoken by the leaders are shown in plain type.

*Portions of the liturgy spoken by the assembly are shown in **bold type**.*

PRELUDE

Gathering

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.

Long-expected God,
**we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.**

God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
† You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.
Amen.

- 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 you, O Israel.

- 7 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. *Refrain*

- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 and ransom captive Israel,
 that mourns in lonely exile here
 until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
and also with you.

All are seated

ADVENT WREATH BLESSING

Light One Candle

Verses 1 - 4



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.

In your Son, Emmanuel,

you have shown us your light

and saved us from the power of sin.

Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.

Increase our longing for your presence,

that at the celebration of your Son's birth

his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst,

for he is our light and our salvation.

Blessed be God forever.

Amen.

Word

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives

the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

¹⁰ The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

- ¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- ² **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**
- ³ Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- ⁴ **O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**
- ⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- ⁶ **You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**
- ⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- ¹⁷ **Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,**

the one you have made so strong for yourself.

¹⁸ And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹ **Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

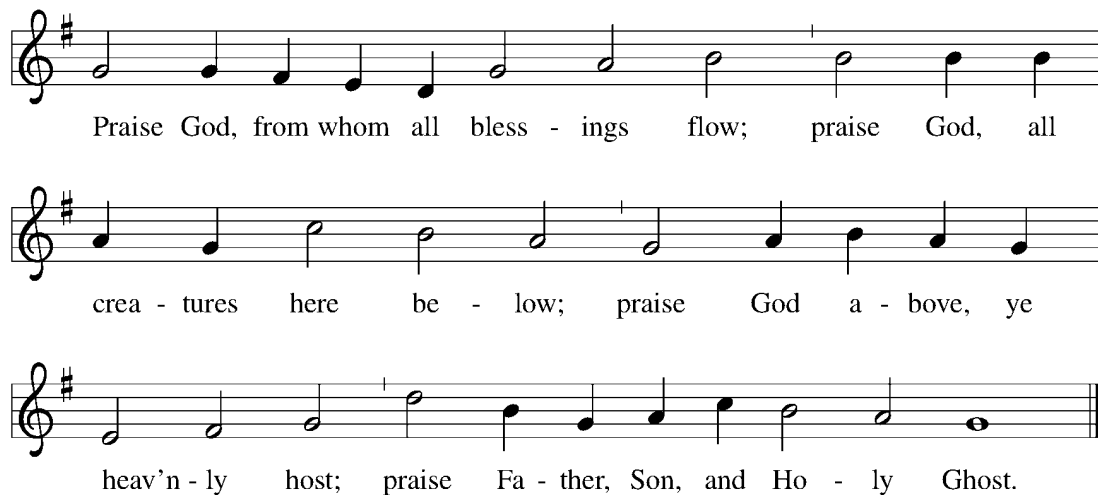
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands as they are comfortable



Alleluia. The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, **and they shall name him Emmanuel. Alleluia.** (*Matt. 1:23*)

THE GOSPEL READING: Matthew 1:18-25

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the first chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth

to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

All are seated

SERMON

Pastor Adam Dowd

HYMN OF THE DAY

Night of Silence

LoL Singers

Response to the Word

The assembly stands as they are comfortable.

THE NICENE CREED

With the whole Church, let us confess our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

All are seated.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God,
trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole
creation.

A brief silence.

In the anticipation of these days, prepare our hearts for your arrival.
Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and
preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us. God of
grace,

receive our prayer.

The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

You send your saving grace and peace to the nations. Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good. May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill especially for Art, Aimee, Donna, Marla, Ken, Vernetta, Roberta, Judy, Linda, Paul, Toni, Kerry, Jim, Caryl, and Gale. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support. Bless young children and new parents. Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service. Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your love. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.
Amen.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

*The assembly greets one another in the name of the Lord with phrases like “**Peace be with you.**” If you have your phone available, text a word of peace to someone who is worshipping alone.*

OFFERING AND PRAYER

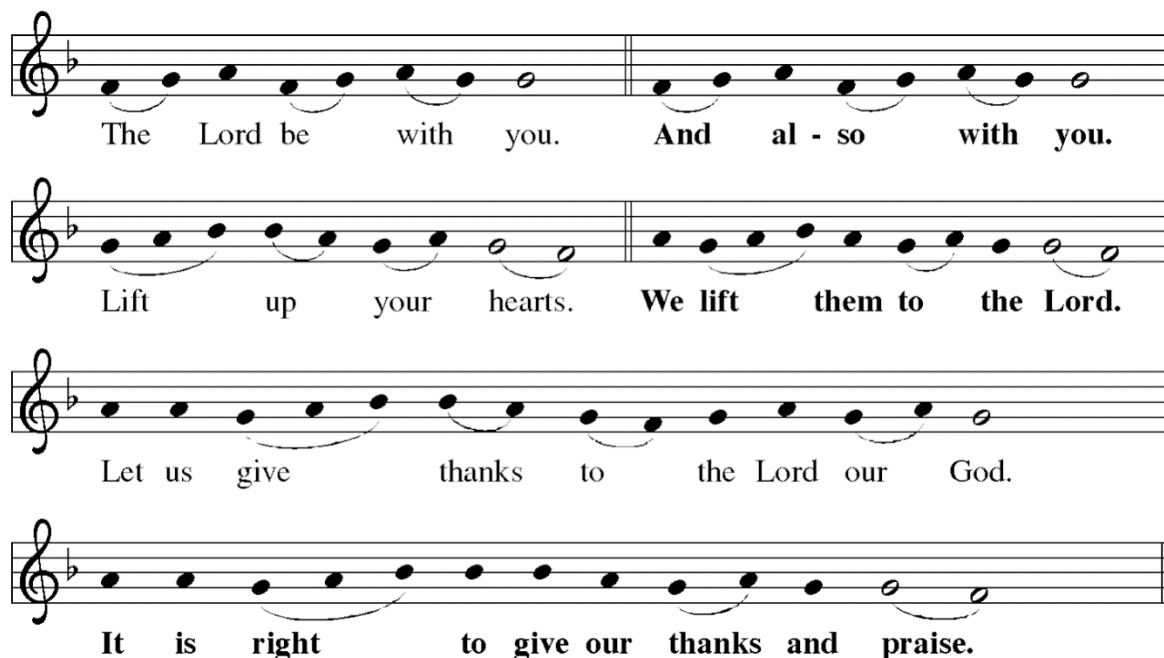
The offering plate is brought forward as a sign of the good gifts, ourselves included, God has given us.

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.
Amen.

Meal

The assembly stands as they are comfortable.



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE AND EUCHARISTIC PRAYER...

join their unending hymn

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and
might; heav - en and earth are filled with your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The minister continues the eucharistic prayer.
....We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:*

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us “*SING*” the pray that Jesus taught us:

**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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors;**

**and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us.
Come, receive what God has promised.

COMMUNION

All are seated. Please take time to prepare yourselves and your communion elements.

We prioritize people with mobility issues. We invite you to come forward in your own time and take a position at the altar that is most accessible for you.

SONG DURING COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

BLESSING

May God who comes among us,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the shadows,
and good news to share today and always.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy,
The Lord look upon you with favor and (+) give you peace.
Amen

SENDING HYMN

Joy to the World

ELW 267

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,

far as, far as the curse is found.

- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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Litanies of Welcome and Farewell-Interim Ministry Network, Baltimore, Maryland

Presiding Minister

Assisting Minister

Lector

Organist

Guitarist

Greeters

Ushers

Acolyte

Video

Pastor Adam Dowd

Dan Buchman

Art Kardatzke

Rosita Yao

Christopher Vincent and Pastor Adam Dowd

David Solorzano

Joy Prueter & Ray Silhan III

Alex Kerfin

Roberta Sejnost and Sherry Sejnost

Announcements 12-21-2025

Wine and Candles this month are provided by **Kevin Glover** in memory of his father, **Brian Glover**.

Flowers today have been provided by **Christopher Vincent and Agnes Durairaj** for **Adeline's** graduation from the University of Illinois.

2026 Offering Envelopes are ready for you to pick up. They are on the table in the Sanctuary. Please do not use them prior to January 1, 2026.

Celebrate Together! The Church Council invites everyone to stop by the Treat Table after service on **Sunday, December 28th**. It's their way of saying thank you for being part of this community – help yourself and enjoy!

Blues Christmas/Longest Night Service Feeling blue this holiday season? Know someone who is struggling with finding joy this Christmas? You and your loved ones are invited to the Blues Christmas Service at **Prince of Peace Lutheran Church tonight at 6pm**. The service is a collaboration between Christ Lutheran of Clarendon Hills, Lord of Life Lutheran of Darien, and Prince of Peace Lutheran of Woodridge.

This special service is designed for those experiencing loss, grief, or hardship during the season. It is open for all who need comforting. Come as you are, and allow the peace, hope, love of Christ to renew your spirit, while listening to some great American Blues music. All are welcome.

Christmas Eve Service We will be having two Christmas Eve Services on **December 24th**. There will be one at **5:00 PM** and another at **11:00 PM**.

Christmas Day Service Christmas morning we will have **Christmas Day Pajamas and Pancake Service at 10:00 AM**. So, come in your PJ and enjoy some breakfast after service.

Final Donations for 2025 All **cash** and **check donations** for 2025 need to be in the Church office by 10:00 AM on **Wednesday, December 31st** to be included in the final count for 2025. Thank you!

Un – Decorate Come and join us to un-decorate the church on **January 4th at 11:15 am**. Please sign up to bring treats. There is a sign up in the Sanctuary. It will be a jolly good time!

Annual Meeting Reports All committee reports for the Annual Meeting are due on **January 9, 2026**. The **Annual Meeting** will be held on **January 25, 2026** after service.

Please pray for members:

Art Sejnost	Aimee Jimenez	Donna Motes
Marla Suda	Ken Gulliford	Vern Sima
Kerry Spitznagle	Roberta Sejnost	Judy Padera
Linda Matta	Paul Ristau	Toni Blesy
Jim Eckwall	Caryl Schaer	Gale Dyskie

A full list of relatives, friends, and military personnel for whom we pray is emailed weekly on Friday.

Last Week's Giving – \$9338.00

Electronic Donation for the month of November- \$844.16

THIS WEEK AT LORD OF LIFE

Sunday	12/21	10:00 AM	Worship
		12:00 PM	Loving Word
Tuesday	12/23	5:00 PM	Overeaters Anonymous
Wednesday	12/24	5:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service
		7:00 PM	One Day at a Time
		11:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service
Thursday	12/25	10:00 AM	Christmas Day Service
Friday	12/26	9:30 AM	Cards
Saturday	12/27	9:00 AM	SDA
Sunday	12/28	10:00 AM	Worship
		11:00 AM	Treat Table
		12:00 PM	Loving Word