



# OUR SAVIOR'S

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

PREPARE YE THE  
WAY OF THE LORD



## **WELCOME**

Welcome on this first Sunday in Advent! The prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist call through the ages: “Prepare the way of the Lord!” With great anticipation let us all prepare to celebrate the advent of Christ. With warm hearts and willing spirits may we sincerely worship the Lord. Welcome and blessings to all!

## **PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP**

“I rejoiced with those who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord.’” Give me joy, dear Jesus, as I prepare to worship you today. Make me understand what my life would be like without you so that I long to hear about your grace and compassion. Help me participate in a way that honors you and builds up all who worship with me, and let their worship strengthen and encourage my faith.

## **WELS CONNECTION**

This month we give thanks to God for the progress of training pastors in Vietnam. You can learn more by visiting [wels.net/tag/hmong-outreach-in-vietnam/](https://wels.net/tag/hmong-outreach-in-vietnam/)

## **SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY**

- Minister ~ Pastor Em. Timothy Kujath
  - Organist ~ Marie Kurth
  - Ushers ~ Tim & Ellen Heil
- Next week ~ Brost, Kurth*

## **Acknowledgments**

Setting One from Christian Worship

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# 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent

December 3, 2023

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## Welcome / WELS Connection

### Opening Hymn

CW 316

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.
- 5 All praise to you, eternal Son,  
whose advent has our freedom won,  
whom with the Father we adore  
and Holy Spirit evermore.

Text: tr. composite; Charles Coffin, 1676-1749  
Text: Public domain

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

## **Confession**

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **Lord, Have Mercy**

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise,  
let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.  
**Amen.**

## Song of Praise: Now Bless the God of Israel

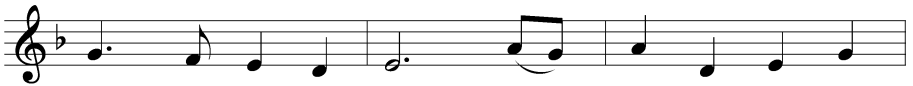
CW 973



1 Now bless the God of Is - ra - el, who comes in love and  
2 Re - mem - ber - ing the cov - e - nant, God res - cues us from  
3 In ten - der mer - cy God will send the Day - spring from on



pow'r, who rais - es from the roy - al house de -  
fear, that we might serve in ho - li - ness and  
high, our ris - ing sun, the light of life for



liv - 'rance in this hour. Through ho - ly proph - ets  
peace from year to year; and you, my child, shall  
those who sit and sigh. God comes to guide our



God has sworn to free us from a - larm, to  
go be - fore to preach, to proph - e - sy, that  
way to peace, that death shall reign no more. Sing



save us from the heav - y hand of all who wish us harm.  
all may know the ten - der love, the grace of God Most High.  
prais - es to the Ho - ly One! O wor - ship and a - dore!

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Tune: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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## Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for your only Son. By his coming, give us strength in our conflicts, and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## The Word

### First Reading

Isaiah 40:1–11

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. <sup>5</sup>And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. <sup>7</sup>The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."

<sup>9</sup>You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup>See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. <sup>11</sup>He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

## Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8–14

<sup>8</sup>But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

<sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

<sup>11</sup>Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup>as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup>But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup>So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

## Gospel Acclamation

Luke 3:4,6

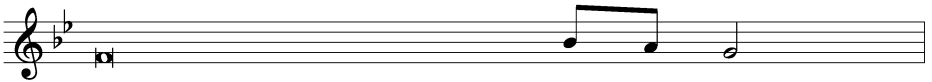


*Refrain*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Tone*



Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.



And all people will see God's sal - va - tion.

Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716671

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, <sup>2</sup>as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way”—

<sup>3</sup>“a voice of one calling in the wilderness,  
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him.’”

<sup>4</sup>And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

<sup>6</sup>John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>And this was his

message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup>I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## **Hymn of the Day**

**CW 312**

- 1 “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.”



- 2 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 ever-springing gladness.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Johann G. Olearius, 1611–1684  
Text: Public domain

**Sermon**

**Isaiah 40:1–11**

## **God's Message of Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Reassurance**

## **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.**

## **Thank Offering & Friendship Register**

*Members of Our Savior's give generous and free will gifts to honor the Lord and support our ministry of the gospel. Guests are welcome to give but should not feel obligated to do so.*

*As the offering is gathered, please sign the Friendship Register as it is passed down the pew.*

## **Prayer of the Church**

Gracious Lord, you sent your Son into our world to destroy the power of Satan and restore the human race as your children and heirs. Work in us during this Advent season so that we may rejoice in the coming of our Savior and long for his coming again.

**Make us eager to receive the King who comes to save us.**

Use the preaching of your holy law to rid us of all delusions that we can gain your love with our own efforts. Move us to realize how hopeless we are because of sin and to feel sorrow for what we have done wrong.

**Lead us to be honest about our sinful status in your sight.**

Lift up our hearts to see the King who comes to save. Reveal to us his willingness to take on our human form and stand in our place. Show us the power he extends in his Word and sacraments to make us your children and keep us in faith. Thrill us with his promise to come and take us to our eternal home to live with you forever.

**Open our eyes to see and believe the wonders of the Savior's love.**

As we live with Christ and trust in him, move us to turn away from sin day after day with the strength your Holy Spirit provides. When we fall, forgive us and renew us to love and serve you and all people.

**Empower us and guide us to walk with Christ by faith.**

Protect us from the distractions that come at this time of the year. Even in gift-giving and celebrating, keep our hearts focused on Christ and his forgiving love.

**Give us joy at his coming at Christmas, his coming in the gospel, and his coming again.**

Move us to share with others the most important gift of this season, the truth about Jesus. Even in busy times lead us to pray for those whose joy is diminished because of sickness, pain, or loss. Give us opportunities to provide help to those in need.

**May others see the love of Christ in our words and actions.**

Loving Lord, work in us during this Advent season so that our joy may be genuine and may rest in the promises of the King who comes to save.

**Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

## **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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

# Blessing

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.

**Amen.**

# Closing Hymn

**CW 583**

*God Loves Me Dearly*



1 God loves me dear - ly, grants me sal -  
2 I was in slav - 'ry, sin, death, and  
3 He sent forth Je - sus, my dear Re -  
4 Je - sus, my Sav - ior, him - self did  
5 Now I will praise you, O Love e -



va - tion, God loves me dear - ly, loves e - ven me.  
dark - ness; God's love was work - ing to make me free.  
deem - er, he sent forth Je - sus and set me free.  
of - fer; Je - sus, my Sav - ior, paid all I owed.  
ter - nal; now I will praise you all my life long.



There - fore I'll say a - gain: God loves me



dear - ly, God loves me dear - ly, loves e - ven me.

Text: August Rische, 1819–1906; tr. composite

Tune: German

Text and tune: Public domain

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***Thank you for worshipping with us!***

***May God richly bless your week.***

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**Sincere Thanks** – We offer our sincere thanks to Pastor Timothy Kujath for leading our worship service and Bible class today.

**Serving the Pastoral Vacancy** – Pastor Jeff Mahnke from St. Peter Lutheran Church is serving as Our Savior’s vacancy pastor. Should you need his pastoral guidance and service, call / text him anytime at 715.297.0132. His email address is [pastorm@mysaintpeter.org](mailto:pastorm@mysaintpeter.org).

**Congregational Open Forum** – Plan to join us next Sunday, December 10. Immediately following our worship service, our church council will share information about their meeting with the circuit pastor, Pastor Andy Ewald, concerning our lengthy pastoral vacancy. As a followup to this open forum, the council is planning a congregational meeting in January. The earliest any congregation can issue another Divine Call is Jan. 10.

**Memorial** – Thank you to Geneva Weith for her gift to Our Savior’s School given in loving memory of her son, Scott. Blessed be his memory. Thanks be to God for the love which led to this gift.

**Pick up today!**

- *“The Mysteries of Christmas,”* daily Christmas devotions which begin on Dec. 1, written by Martin Luther College professors.
- *Forward in Christ* December issue
- *Meditations* – devotions begin today.

**Christmas Parade Thanks** – Many thanks to all who contributed toward candy for Our Savior’s parade float. Thanks also to our parents, teachers and students for all their work on the float and on parade day.

**Mustang Tumblers Available** – We have just a few Mustang tumblers left. They are available for \$15.00 in the narthex on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Divine Call News** – The Western Wisconsin District Mission Board has extended a Divine Call to Pastor Eric Roecker to serve as the missionary pastor for the new mission in Kronenwetter. Pastor Roecker currently serves as the WELS administrator for Evangelism.

## *Holiday Worship Schedule*

Sunday, Dec. 17	Children's Christmas Service - 9:00 AM
Sunday, Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Worship – 2:00 PM (No Sunday morning worship)
Monday, Dec. 25	Christmas Day Worship - 9:00 AM
Sunday, Dec. 31	Sunday Worship - 9:00 AM

**Parking Lot Assistance and Wheelchairs Available** – With winter weather come concerns about slipping in the parking lot or on the sidewalks. Our volunteers do their best to keep walking areas clear and salted, but sometimes it's impossible to remove all slippery spots. If you would like help getting from your car to the church entrance, please talk to an usher, greeters at the doors or Marie in the church office. We're happy to help! We also have several wheelchairs available as needed.

**SNOW!** – Your help is needed with snow shoveling and salting at church and school. Please sign up in the narthex today. Thank you!

**OWLS Christmas Luncheon** – Now that Thanksgiving is behind us it is time to concentrate on the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave His all for us, that we would be forgiven. The OWLS Christmas luncheon will be on Tuesday, December 12th at Our Savior Lutheran Church starting at 11:30. Menu will be chicken, potatoes, vegetables, roll, salad, desserts. Cost is again \$12. All are welcome to join us. Please RSVP to Evan and Sandy at 715-693-1337 or Ruth at 715-241-8879 by Dec 7th. Hope to see you there.

**Ladies' Aid Christmas Luncheon: All ladies are invited!** –

The Ladies Aid welcomes all ladies of the congregation to join them for their Christmas luncheon on Thursday, Dec. 14 at 11:30 am. They're meeting at the Mandarin Chinese Restaurant on Stewart Ave, Wausau. Instead of a gift exchange, they are collecting donations for the food pantry.

**Date Change for Pioneer Event** – Pioneers will be meeting at NLHS from 2-4 pm **next Sunday, Dec. 10** to make a Christmas centerpiece/pinecone/salt ornaments.

## This Week at Our Savior's

<b>Today</b>	9:00 AM 10:15 AM	Worship Sunday School & Bible Class
<b>Monday</b>	6:00 PM	Board of Education
<b>Tuesday</b>	6:00 PM 6:15 PM	Council PTO
<b>Next Sunday 12/10</b>	9:00 AM  10:15 AM	Worship with Communion <b>Open Forum</b> Sunday School <i>Food Pantry Sunday</i>

## Growing Together

November 26, 2023

<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Vision</u>	<u>Debt Red</u>	<u>Missions</u>	<u>Plate</u>	<u>Thanksgiving</u>
\$5,810.00	\$400.00	\$385.00	\$25.00	\$23.00	\$1,470.00

<u>NLHS Operating</u>	<u>OS School</u>	<u>Publications</u>
\$250.00	\$200.00	\$34.00

**Anticipated Weekly Offerings: \$4,077**

**Attendance:**      Thanksgiving, November 23 – 35  
                              Sunday, November 19 – 60

### **NLHS Live Nativity Event Needs Actors, Carolers, Volunteers -**

The Kronenwetter Mission Core Group is seeking volunteers for "The Greatest Gift," a live outdoor nativity. This event will be a wonderful outreach opportunity to share the message of Jesus, our Savior, with the Kronenwetter community. It will take place on Saturday, December 16th, at Northland Lutheran High School. If you are interested or have questions, text/email Pastor Jeff Grundmeier at 906-203-0411 / jgrundmeier@nlhs.org.



# OUR SAVIOR'S

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Growing in Jesus, Sharing His Love*

## **Our Savior's Ev. Lutheran Church**

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Facebook: Our Savior's Lutheran Church and School

### **Pastor Jeff Mahnke, Vacancy Pastor**

715-297-0132

[pastorm@mysaintpeter.org](mailto:pastorm@mysaintpeter.org)