

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Divine Service Four

The Second Sunday in Advent

December 8, 2023

Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way,
the voice of one crying in the wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Mark 1:2-3





The Second Sunday in Advent

December 10, 2023

8:00 and 10:30 AM

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

(Missouri Synod)

9770 Foothills Canyon Blvd.

Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

Sunday Worship Services.....8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Bible Classes and Sunday School.....9:25 a.m.

Church Office.....303-683-1300

Rev. Bruce Skelton, Pastor, Cell.....303-908-3339

Fax..... 303-470-0165

Reaching lost souls with the Gospel:

Nourishing and equipping the saints for life and ministry!

Prayer for the Second Sunday in Advent

O Eternal God, we come before You with expectant hearts. Your words of promise in Zechariah, "See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation" stir us to believe that Jesus will come again. He will come in spite of, and to take away, the load of sin, guilt, sorrow, and doubt that we insist on carrying around. We give You praise and thanks that He comes neither in judgment nor in condemnation. Rather, Jesus comes with forgiveness for our sins so that we may be God's dear children and enjoy the bliss of heaven forever. Keep us safe until that day of Jesus' second coming! Amen.



Confession and Absolution

343 Prepare the Royal Highway

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

Matthew 28:19b; 18:20

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

Exhortation

Psalm 124:8; Psalm 130:3–4; Luke 18:13

- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- C** **who made heaven and earth.**
- P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
- C** **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**
- P** Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, and call upon Him in prayer and praise, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Confession of Sins

- C** **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Absolution

[John 20:19–23]

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.



Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 80:1, 8a, 9b, 7; antiphon: v. 3



Restore us, | O God;*

let your face shine, that we | may be saved!

**Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph | like a flock!***

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, | shine forth.

You brought a vine out of | Egypt;*
it took deep root and | filled the land.

Restore us, O | God of hosts;*
let your face shine, that we | may be saved!

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Restore us, | O God;*

let your face shine, that we | may be saved!

Kyrie

Mark 10:47



G Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Gloria in Excelsis

During Advent the Gloria in Excelsis is omitted.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 40:1–11

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every 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.
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Behold your God!"
Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.



Rejoice greatly, O daughter of | Zion.*
Shout aloud, O daughter of Je- | rusalem.
Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;*
righteous and having sal- | vation.
Blessèd is he who comes in the name | of the Lord.*
From the house of the Lord we | bless you.

Epistle: 2 Peter 3:8–14

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness,

but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse



Holy Gospel: Mark 1:1–8

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the first chapter.

G Glory to You, O Lord.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way,
the voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.



Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

**And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence 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.**

Sit

344 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Sermon

"Messengers of the Messiah"

Text: Mark 1:1-8

596 All Christians Who Have Been Baptized

Stand

Prayer of the Church

After each portion of the prayer:

P Lord, in Your mercy,
C hear our prayer.

Sit

Offering

*(Please add your name to the red fellowship
book and pass it to your fellow worshipers.)*

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.**

Closing Collect

A Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Benedicamus

Psalm 103:1

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

Numbers 6:24–26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C Amen.

336 Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending



Soli Deo Gloria!

(To God alone be the glory.)

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Four from Lutheran Service Book

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Announcements



Assisting Elders:
8 a.m. – Steve White
10:30 a.m. – Andy Olson



Pick up your Lutheran Hour Ministries Advent devotions from the table by the picture wall in the narthex. Large print are available.



The Semi - Annual Voters' Assembly is TODAY, between services. The main order of business is the 2024 Budget, as well as updates from the Boards.



You are invited to the Memorial Service of Rueben Sironen to be held on Thursday, December 14, at 2 p.m. It will be at Wind Crest in the Town Center Music Room.



If you wish to beautify the Lord's sanctuary this Christmas season with a beautiful 6-inch poinsettia, please sign up on the sheet in the narthex by TODAY, December 10. The cost is \$10 per plant. If you wish to purchase one in honor of a special event or in memory of a loved one, please note that next to your name.

Please make checks payable to Holy Cross, note "poinsettia" in the memo section, and place in the offering plate.

Plants can be taken home after either of the services on Sunday, December 31.



The LWML is having "Mite Box Sunday" TODAY and the second Sunday of every month. On these Sundays they have the big Mite Box in the narthex to gather free will offerings to support the mission projects they have selected to provide for this year.



This Wednesday, December 13, 2023

- 11:30 am Advent Worship Service
- 12:30 pm Lunch provided by the Fellowship Committee
- 6 pm Potluck (Fellowship will provide pasta dishes and the congregation is asked to bring salad, bread or a dessert)
- 6:45 pm Christmas Carol Sing-a-long
- 7 pm Advent Worship Service

In order to plan how much pasta to make, please indicate your interest in attending on the sheet on the snack table.

**JOIN US FOR FOOD, FELLOWSHIP, AND THE WORD.
BRING A FRIEND!**



A Big Shout Out to all who helped to decorate the sanctuary and the narthex for the season. Twenty hard workers showed up. Thanks Pastor, Monty Ahrens, Andrea and Rene Lowery, Josh Turner, Dave McCrosky and his daughters Audrey and Sylvia, Chad and Angie Otto, Scott and Barbara Schlapkohl, Randy and Lisa Shelton, Lynne Rodefald, Jane Wheatley, Andy Olson, Marie McQuarrie, and Steve and Becky White.



Portals of Prayer for January-March 2024 are out!

Pick up your copy from the table in the narthex. We have digest size copies if you need larger print. These are a great resource to use in your daily devotions!



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS



December 13th, Wednesday - Advent Service

11:30 AM Church Service, with lunch following

6 PM: Pasta and Pizza Potluck

6:45 PM: Hymn Sing

7:00 PM: Church Service

December 24th, Sunday - Christmas Eve

10:00 AM: Worship Service, with children's program

7:00 PM: Christmas Eve Service

December 25th, Monday - Christmas Day

10:AM: Worship Service, with Communion



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Dec. 24th: 10:00 AM

Reception follows, with light appetizers and cookies.

Coffee, tea, and juice will be provided.

If you are able to provide cheese, meats, crackers, fruit, cookies, or other appetizer, please let us know by signing up in the Narthex.



We hope you'll make plans to join us for the 2023 Canto Deo Christmas! Now in our 17th year, the Canto Deo Festival Choir and Orchestra are delighted to again present our gift of live, sacred Christmas music to audiences throughout Denver. Highlights of this year's program showcase both old favorites as well as new works by composers like John Rutter, Barlow Bradford, and Thomas Hewitt Jones. Bring the kids to conduct the orchestra!

Performance times/locations:

Saturday December 16 - 1 pm

St. Francis Cabrini Catholic Parish

Sunday December 17 - 3 pm

Bethany Lutheran Church

Monday December 18 - 7 pm

Bethany Lutheran Church

Tuesday December 19 – 7 pm

St. Andrew United Methodist Church

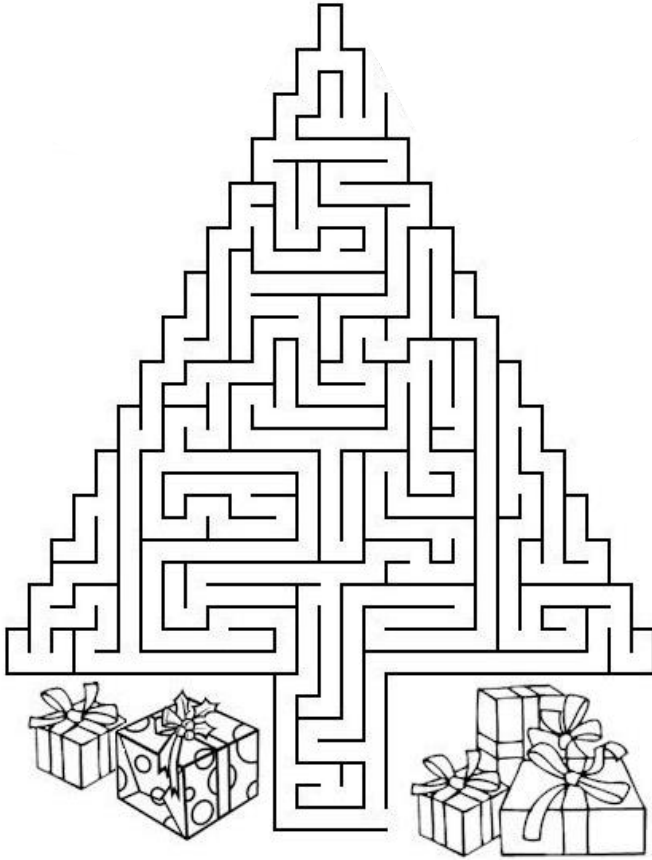
Free tickets are required for admission. You can get them from Tom Kingham or online at CantoDeo.org (link to EventBrite)

Chrismons



The Christmas tree is decorated with Chrismons and small white lights. Chrismons are ornaments whose designs are monograms of and symbols for our Lord Jesus Christ. Because these designs have been used by His followers since biblical times, they are the heritage of all Christians and serve to remind us of the One we follow. All Chrismons are made in combinations of white and gold to symbolize the purity and majesty of the Son of God and the Son of Man.

- ❖ The **star** represents Jesus who said, “I am ... the bright and morning star.”
- ❖ The **Latin cross** symbolizes the cross on which our Lord died for our sins.
- ❖ The **Chi Rho (XP)** is the oldest known monogram for Christ and was commonly used in the early church. “X” and “P” are the first two letters of the Greek word for “Christ.”
- ❖ The **Greek cross** was much used by early Greek artists. The extensions are of equal length.
- ❖ The **triquetra** represents the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The **triangle** represents the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The **open book** represents the Bible, the written Word of God.
- ❖ The **orb with cross** symbolizes our Lord Jesus’ dominion over the earth.
- ❖ The **shell** with three drops of water signifies Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The **chalice** represents the Lord’s Supper, the Sacrament of the Altar.
- ❖ The **descending dove** symbolizes the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The **lamb** is a scriptural symbol for Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
- ❖ The **butterfly** represents our Lord’s resurrection, assuring all believers of eternal life.
- ❖ The **crown** symbolizes the victory Jesus won for all on the cross. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.



**“Life Quotes” from Lutherans for Life
December 10, 2023**

“You might not be impressive by the world’s standards. You might be a third-shift worker, a nameless neighbor, or a sinner who messed up in very public ways. But the angel declared good news for all people, which logically must include you. So, rejoice today! A Savior was born to you!”

*Pastor Mike Novotny, Time of Grace
A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*



Holy Cross Lutheran is on Facebook.
Check us out and Like us at
facebook.com/HolyCrossHighlandsRanch.

A Messenger Sent from God

It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way."

Mark 1:2 (NIV)

Based on Mark 1:1-8 (NIV)



V J P O I V S T C O N F E S S
E A A M C L H M P R O P H E T
Z K T G A G N R M X J R G C C
S W H D I A L T E L T E F J H
J X N A D R R C S O R A S V C
R A T R S E Q H S C E C A U E
S S O U S V J O E U P H P M S
B J C E C O B N N S E I I T N
U I D A Z L A E G T N N K C K
J B T K L Z P Y E S T G Q H C
O H Z E A L T Y R V A K F R A
H V O I C E I Y E W N I I I N
N S L L B T Z N T L C L S S R
L I N B H K E A G V E H P T B
C N G O S P E L W R I V E R R

LOCUSTS
CALLING
REPENTANCE
JORDAN
PATH
HONEY
PREACHING
SANDALS
GOSPEL
RIVER

BAPTIZE
VOICE
CHRIST
JESUS
MESSENGER
PROPHET
JOHN
DESERT
CONFESS

"His Name Is John"

"And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High because you will prepare the way for the Lord." Luke 1:76 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 1:67-80



V A J P P B S Q I M W K I I Q
S R R R N M K A M S I T W Z S
R Z L O Y E Z A L E R G V Y O
U C P P J G H K H V R A H A V
V G M H I S E R V E A C E T U
G G G E T I G R I G Q T Y L Y
I S B T C P R E P A R E I M C
H A P E Z A H I P L W L X O G
Q V R C E E Y O F O J O W G N
K I A F D W P J L I D R K K F
V O I P E A C E S Y D D P P D
O R S F R N A F O G A V X O G
X R E M Z L H F R C V D J C J
C Q B H E A N O T G I W N C W
L T T D H R O Y A L D S Q J D

SALVATION
PRAISE
PREPARE
SAVIOR
DAVID
FEAR
MERCY
LORD

ROYAL
HOLY
PROPHET
MIGHTY
PEACE
CERVE
ISRAEL

A Messenger Sent from God

It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way." Mark 1:2 (NIV)

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
W	Q	D	F	R	T	Z	U	X	B	A	N	M	J	P	O	Y	G	C	L	S	I	K	H	E	V

- 3-25-21-25-5-6 _____
- 14-16-5-3-11-12 _____
- 21-11-12-3-11-20-21 _____
- 14-16-24-12 _____
- 10-11-15-6-22-7-25-3 _____
- 5-22-26-25-5 _____
- 1-11-17 _____
- 18-16-21-15-25-20 _____
- 20-16-19-8-21-6-21 _____
- 26-16-22-19-25 _____
- 24-16-12-25-17 _____
- 15-5-25-15-11-5-25 _____
- 14-25-21-8-21 _____
- 15-11-6-24 _____
- 21-6-5-11-22-18-24-6 _____

JESUS	JOHN	DESERT	GOSPEL	VOICE
STRAIGHT	WAY	HONEY	LOCUSTS	PREPARE
SANDALS	BAPTIZED	PATH	RIVER	JORDAN

Petitions and Prayers: Knowing that the Spirit Himself helps us to pray, we have the assurance that for those who love God “all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.”



Health concerns:

God, You have ever been the healer of Israel. When Your Son came among us, His healing power showed Your presence. We bring before You today our families and friends who are suffering. Like the friends who cut through the roof to lay the man who was paralyzed before Jesus, we beg You to ease the burden of their suffering Give strength and wisdom to those who tend them. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Please keep the following in your prayers:

- **Jim Sarafin** is recovering from Covid.
- **Leisa Burns, Theresa Kingham's** sister, is recovering from cancer surgery. Pray for healing and strength.
- **Mike Kurtz, Keith Rodefeld's** brother-in-law, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Pray for peace, comfort and healing according to God's will.
- **Dave McCrosky's mother** has suffered a stroke. Pray for healing.
- **John Kingham**, brother of **Tom Kingham**, is recovering from open heart surgery. Pray for healing.
- **McKinley Ford**, daughter of Erica and Andy Olson, is having doctor appointments trying to figure out the cause of a low white blood count and a resolution.
- **Devon** Hanson (grandson of **Connie and Terry Mitchell**) – mental health issues
- **Dillon** (grandson of **Connie and Terry Mitchell** - health issues
- **Roger Frank** (brother of **Connie Mitchell**) cancer
- **Kathy**, daughter of **Helen** and **Joe Tabris**, is recovering from surgery. Pray for healing and restored faith.
- **Mary** (relative of **Tabris's**) pray for protection and wisdom for her family concerning special needs.
- **Angela** (single mother in Illinois) friend of **Helen Tabris** –waiting for heart transplant
- **Jamie** (is missing and has mental health issues) and young daughter **Jade** who has been adopted by family. Pray for the family's salvation.

***The Lord is faithful. He will establish you
and guard you against the evil one.***

2 Thessalonians 3:3



***Show us your steadfast love, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.***

Psalm 85:7

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The Lutheran Hour
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6 a.m. on 850 KOA Radio or
click on "Listen Now" anytime.**

Holy Cross Lutheran Church



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gift
ideas!**

