

FIRST READING. Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labour has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of
the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

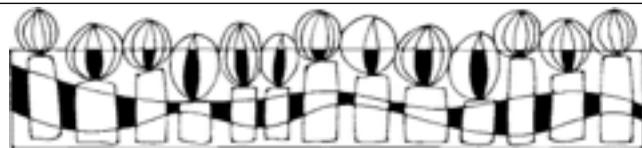
SECOND READING. Hebrews 10:5-10

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body you have prepared for me;
in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings
you have taken no pleasure.
Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God"
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).'

When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings' (these are offered according to the law), then he added, 'See, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

GOSPEL. Luke 1:39-45

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'



Sunday, December 19, 2021

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—we proclaim the Lord's death." From *Sundays & Seasons*, copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress

"In response to God's love, St. Matthew's is a faith community welcoming all to grow in faith, to worship Christ and to reach out to everyone."

Welcome!

We hope our worship will be a blessing to you. Our Lord's Supper is being celebrated today. Everyone is welcome to receive this Holy Sacrament.

COVID-19

Following guidelines from our Synod and Public Health, we are making every effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Everyone must show proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 and wear a face covering. Please stay home if you are ill. Let's all stay safe!

Greenery

As we enter Advent, the Season of Hope, you will notice that greenery is placed in the sanctuary to the Glory of God, in preparation for the coming Christmas fulfillment.

If you missed last week's sermon, it is available on our website.

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Lighting the Advent Wreath

We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath, open our eyes to see your presence in the lowly ones of this earth.

Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us in the Word made flesh. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. (From *Sundays & Seasons*, © 2021 Augsburg Fortress.)

Amen.

Light all four candles. Sing Hymn 240, verse 4

Luke 1:47-55 - Tune 268 From Heaven Above (sung in unison)

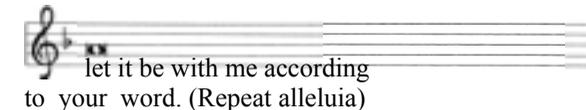
With all my heart my God I praise,
To God my Savior anthems raise.
He sees his servants, bends to bless,
And sanctifies their lowliness.

The mighty from their thrones are cast,
The humble lifted up at last,
The rich denied, the hungry fed,
The proud dispersed, the faithful led.

From age to age God's love is shown
To those he deigns to call his own.
The mercies of the Lord endure,
For God recalls his promise sure!

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 1:38



May God bring comfort to our friend Joan Glabb and her family as they mourn the recent loss of her son, **Shane Glabb** on December 12, 2021.

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Prelude and Announcements

GATHERING

Lighting of the Advent Candle ...printed Prayer of the Day

WORD

Luke 1:47-55.....printed in bulletin
Hymn283 O Come, All Ye Faithful
An Unexpected Christmas, Part 1

Hymn276 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
An Unexpected Christmas, Part 2

Hymn ..290 Go Tell It on the Mountain
Prayers of Intercession
Prayer Response "Your mercy is great."

Peace (non-contact gestures)

MEAL

Offering Prayer
Great Thanksgiving.....Page 129
Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord's PrayerPage 134
Communion

"Lamb of God"Page 135
Communion Hymns264, 265
Prayer after Communion

SENDING

Blessing
Sending Song ..254 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Dismissal: Go in peace. Christ is near.
Thanks be to God.