

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

138 3RD ST. NW, VALLEY CITY, ND 58072

(701) 845 - 1328 | OURSAVIORSVC.COM

The Second Sunday of Advent
THOSE WHO DREAM... *prepare the way*

CALL TO WORSHIP

John the Baptist said, "Prepare the way." So, how do we prepare our minds for worship?

We silence the inner critic. We let go of busy thoughts. We make space for God to speak.

How do we prepare our hearts for worship?

We bless all emotions. We feel what we feel. We open ourselves up to be moved.

How do we prepare our bodies for worship?

We take in the scent, sight, and feel of our space. We breathe in God's mercy. We exhale God's love.

How do we prepare our souls for worship?

We wear our hearts on our sleeves. We trust that even now, God is with us.

What we practice in worship, we must live out in our daily lives.

So prepare the way. Let us worship Holy God.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS + LET THE CHILDREN COME

CANDLE LIGHTING – THE CANDLE OF PEACE

I dream of the first pitch of opening season.

I dream of a laundry day, where each sock finds its mate.

I dream of family home for the holidays.

I dream of good books and homemade meals.

I dream of sunset drives with the windows down.

These are beautiful dreams, but I also have urgent dreams.

I dream of conversations across party lines.

I dream of more bridges and less walls.

I dream of more laughter and less fear.

I dream of more listening and less tears.

But most of all, I dream of peace like a river.

Today we light the candle of peace. May it remind us that there is another way. Amen.

HYMN

"When Long Before Time (*The Singer and the Song*)" #861 v.1 – 2 & 4

- 1 When long before time and the worlds were begun, when there was no earth and no sky and no sun,
and all was deep silence and night reigned supreme, and even our Maker had only a dream--**
- 2 The silence was broken when God sang the Song, and light pierced the darkness and rhythm began,
and with its first birth-cries creation was born, and creaturely voices sang praise to the morn.**
- 4 Though down through the ages the Song disappeared, its harmonies broken and almost unheard,
the Singer comes to us to sing it again, our God-is-with-us in the world now as then.**

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.

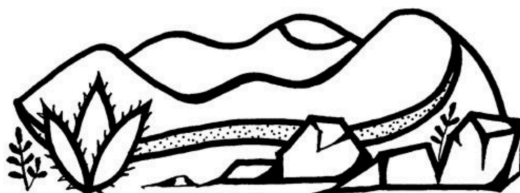
PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God dreams.

Holy God, we wish that peace was something we could buy. We wish that peace could be ordered in a subscription service, found on a map, downloaded in an app, or voted for in a ballot. We wish that peace was as easy as a one-time choice when we are feeling our best. However, what we have found is that peace involves everyday decisions over and over, whether or not we are feeling our best. So today we confess that we need your help in this Advent season. Prepare the way for greater peace, and teach us how to be a part of it.

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May God's guiding hand surround you. May you know comfort. May you know peace. Thanks be to God. **Amen.**



GATHERING HYMN

"Prepare the Royal Highway" #264



- 1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
- 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
- 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
- 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch-es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Let us pray...God of Peace, we must admit, there are a million things on our minds. We would like to be as focused as John the Baptist—preparing the way, gathering the crowd, spreading the word of your arrival. Maybe then we'd know peace. However, more often than not, we are a swirling compilation of grocery lists, text messages, e-mails, and over-referenced to-do lists. So today, we ask for your help in preparing the way. Could you start with our ears, and then maybe move to our hearts? We'd like to hear you more clearly. Maybe then we'll know peace. Gratefully we pray, Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1 – 11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

PSALM 85:1 – 2, 8 – 13

Righteousness shall prepare a pathway for God. (Ps. 85:13)

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8 – 15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1 – 8

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

SERMON



HYMN

"We Are Called" #720

- 1 Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord! We are called to be light for the kingdom, to live in the freedom, of the city of God. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.
- 2 Come! Open your heart! Show your mercy to all those in fear! We are called to be hope for the hopeless so hatred and blindness will be no more. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.
- 3 Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be one! God will reign, and we'll walk with each other as sisters and brothers united in love. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that a voice cried out in the wilderness, Saying, "Prepare the way of the Lord."

And so, we tune into church on cold, blustery days. We march toward justice. We roll up our sleeves. We plant trees for our children. We make art. We choose hope.

We remember when we gathered at the Table. We set an extra plate. We sing along with joy. We share stories and wisdom. We celebrate children. We fall together. We rise together. We love together.

We do all these things because we believe that God loves us so much that God shows up here. So we prepare and prepare.

APOSTLES' CREED (ELW p. 105)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SHARING OF THE PEACE

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN:**"In the Bleak Midwinter" #294**

- 1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
- 2 Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.
- 3 What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man I would do my part; yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

OFFERING PRAYER**LORD'S PRAYER****BLESSING****SENDING HYMN:****"It Came upon the Midnight Clear" #282**

- 1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
- 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
- 3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
- 4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



The Beginning of the Good News

by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | Inspired by Mark 1:1-8 | Digital painting

As I've returned to this scripture, I've been struck by the fact that the story of the good news according to Mark begins with protest—with crowds swelling and shouting, with a movement of people hungry for change and willing to risk their lives for it. And so, I'm committing to preparing the way—for God's message of liberation and love to truly be heard and made known.

—Lisle Gwynn Garrity

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Organist Judy Karch

Senior Choir Director Tricia Lebahn

Office Coordinator Brenda Skramstad

Youth Director Kyla Fetsch

This Week's Radio Broadcast is given in memory of Eileen Maresh, Jim Flynn, Larry Hetland, Harland Haugen, Violet Quick, and Gene Heinze.

Sunday Worship from Home continues: 8:30 am Facebook Live, 11:00 KOVC 1490 AM Radio Broadcast, afternoon "OSLC Valley City" YouTube. If you will like a bulletin mailed to you, please contact the church office.

Poinsettia Plants to decorate at Christmas may be shared with the church. If you wish to share a plant in honor of memory of someone, please let the church office know in writing by December 10th by emailing or getting a note to the church. Drop plants off at the church any time before Christmas Eve. They may be picked up the week after Christmas. A list of names will be printed in the Christmas Day bulletin.

Sign Up for our Advent Text Message Devotions: to receive a daily devotional text message devotions during Advent, send a text to this number: 81010. Send this message: @8g344a2.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Valley City will host the next Vitalant blood drive on Thursday, December 17th, 1:30 -6:00 PM and Friday, December 18th, 8:00 AM - 12 Noon. All staff and donors are required to wear a mask or cloth face covering. One way valve masks are not permitted. To make an appointment contact Ruth Larson @ 701-845-4257 or register online at www.bloodhero.com (use code: valleycity)

December Bible Reading Challenge: Each day during the month of December, you are invited to read a chapter from the book of Luke. There are 24 chapters, so by Christmas Eve you will have read the whole story of Jesus' life. Will you join the challenge?

Olivewood Items are available for sale outside the church office during the month of December. They make great holiday gifts. Sales support Christian artists living in Palestine.

Monday Morning Prayer Group will not gather in person at this time. From wherever we are on Monday mornings, we will start our week in prayer as we pause and pray for the people of Our Savior's as well as a variety of prayer concerns, This week, we hold in prayer: Michael & Maureen Rueckert; Larry & Mary Salberg; Andrew & Katie Sather, Oliver, Hayley, Charlotte, Parker; Dale & Colleen Sather; Stephen Sather; Maynard Satrom; Yvonne Sauer.

Apartment for Rent Unfurnished ~950 sq. ft. two bedroom, 2nd floor apartment with hot water & heat included, stove, fridge, washer and dryer, private entrance with off street parking. Available immediately. No pets or smoking. References. Call Bobby at (701)840-0250.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity! Offerings can be mailed to the church office at 138 3rd St. NW, Valley City, ND. Online offerings can be made at the church website, www.oursaviorsvc.org, by clicking the blue "Give Now" button at the bottom of the homepage.

January – October 2020

Year To Date Income \$273,175.75

Year To Date Expense \$289,447.24

Year to Date-Expense Over Income (-\$16,425.47)

A week of OSLC ministry: \$7,148.10

Last week's General Fund Offering: \$3,756.38