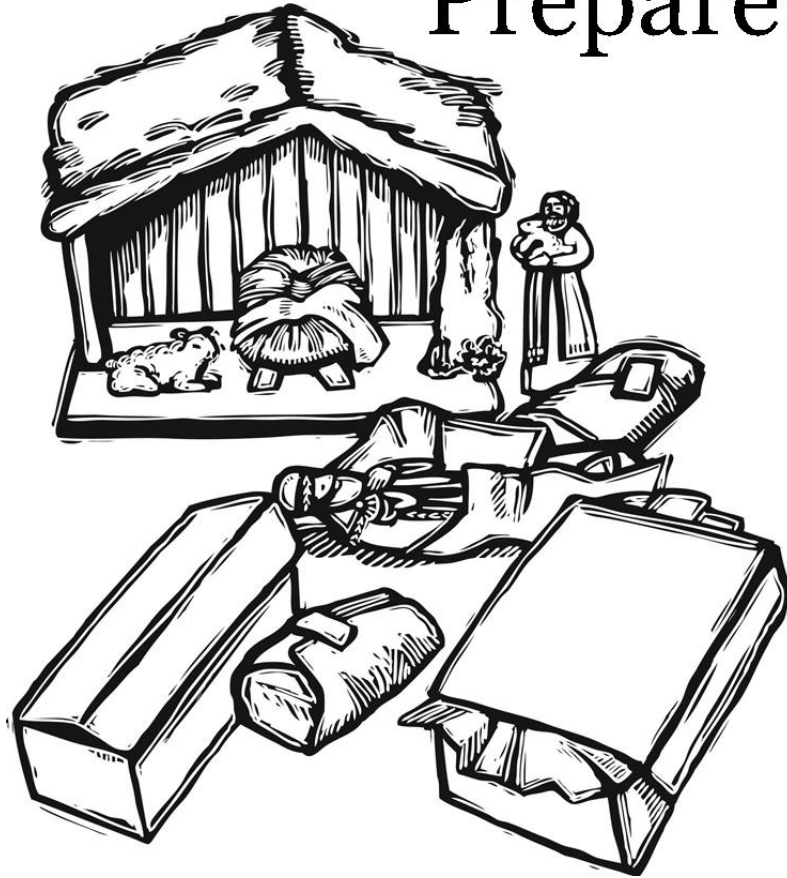


Prepare!



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Worship with Holy Communion
December 10, 2017 – 9:00 AM

Christ Lutheran Church
Woodcliff Lake, NJ

WELCOME TO CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are glad you are worshipping with us today to hear the Good News of the coming of God.

Breaking the sound barrier! We invite you to try one of our listening devices, which allows you to sit anywhere in the sanctuary. They are available by speaking to an usher, Tom Kearns or David Crouse.

Pink Prayer Cards: You may write names for prayer on a pink card found in the pew rack. Please place your card on the altar rail for inclusion in the prayers of the day. If you wish a name to be added to our printed prayer list (for four weeks) please write "Prayer List" on the card. Please be sure this prayer request is approved by the person for whom we are praying.

Holy Communion: All who are baptized are invited to the table where Christ is bodily present in the bread and wine. At the directions of our ushers, all who are able kneel at the rail to receive this gift. The individual cups contain wine and grape juice (grape juice is in the center of the tray). A common cup with wine is also available. Children who commune should hold out their hands to the server.

Nursery Facilities: There is a self-serve Nursery and Infant Room for young children accompanied by their parents. The Infant Room contains a bathroom with a changing table. These rooms are located along the hallway from the side door of the sanctuary.

Need an offering envelope? We have envelopes in the pews for you. Please include your contact information or envelope number. **We also accept checks online.** Visit our website (www.clc4u.com) and click on "Give" to learn how to set up an account with your bank information. Thank you for your gift!

Contact Information:

Pastor: Rev. Marc A. Stutzel
Director of Music: Argine Safari
Director of Youth Choirs: David Scance
Parish Administrator: Doris Crouse
32 Pascack Rd., Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07677
201-391-4224 clc4u2@verizon.net

Share with us at clc4u.com

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 instagram.com/clc4u

 [@christwoodcliff](https://twitter.com/christwoodcliff)

Open on Sundays: 9:00 and 10:30 am

For today's worship all *portions in italics* will be spoken by our worship leaders.
Congregational responses are in **bold-faced type**.

[Please stand.]

GATHERING – CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

God – you are faithful.

God – you are merciful.

God – you are love.

Hear our prayer as we confess our sins to you.

God, I confess that often I do not place you first in my life.

I confess that I have lived for myself and ignored the needs of others.

**I confess I have doubted your love and care. Some of my sin I know
but some only you know.**

In the name of Jesus, forgive me.

God is faithful.

God is merciful.

God is love.

In the name of ✠ Jesus, your sins are forgiven.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG – “Awesome God”

Words and Music by
Rich Mullins

$\text{♩} = 74$

Bm⁷ C#m⁷ F#m

1. When He rolls up His sleeves — He ain't just “put-tin’ on the ritz”— Our
 (2. When the) sky — was star - less in the void — of the night— Our

4 Bm⁷ C#m⁷ F#m C#m⁷/F# F#m⁷

God is an awe - some God! There is thun - der in His foot-steps — and
 God is an awe - some God! He spoke in - to the dark-ness and cre -

7 Bm⁷ C#m⁷ F#m

light-ning in His fists— Our God is an awe - some God! The
 -a - ted the light— Our God is an awe - some God!

10 Bm⁷ C#m⁷

Lord — was - n't jok-ing when He kicked 'em out of E-den, it was-n't for no rea-son that He
 Judg-ment and wrath — He poured — out on Sod - om, mer-cy and grace — He — gave —

13 D Bm⁷

shed — His — blood; His re - turn is ver - y close and so you'd bet-ter be be-liev-in' that our
 — us at the cross. I hope that we have — not — too quick-ly for-got - ten that our

16 C#m⁷ F#m D A

God is an awe - some God! Our God is an awe - some God, He —
 God is an awe - some God!

[Song continues on the following page.]

20 E F#m D A
 reigns from heav-en a - bove; With wis - dom, pow'r and love— our

24 Bm⁷ C#+⁷ C#⁷ 1, 3. F#m 2. F#m
 God is an awe - some God. Our God!

27 Bm⁷ C#m⁷ D.S.
 2. When the

30 4. F#m Bm⁷ C#m⁷
 God! Our God is an awe - some

32 F#m Bm C#m⁷ F#m
 God! Our God is an awe - some God!

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 THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON [The congregation may sit.]

ADVENT 2 WREATH LIGHTING—Peace(based on Isaiah 40:1-2,9-11) [by Rev. Natalia Terfa]

Isaiah the Prophet reassured the people, God is sending words of comfort to you, speaking tenderly to you. God promises that your hard labor is over, your sentence has been served and your penalty has been paid. You are forgiven not once but double all that is needed.

Go up to a high mountain, and call out the good news! Lift your voices up with strength and call out the good news! Do not be afraid! Your God is coming.

Our God is mighty, but our God is also gentle. God loves the flock and will feed it just the way a shepherd would, holding us close like lambs and guiding us, old and young.

We wait for God's peace and live in God's hope as we light these candles.

[Two candles are lit.]

Loving God, come and shine your light in the world!

THE FIRST READING – Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: "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. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry? All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass." "The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever."

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL according to St. Mark 1:1-8

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹*The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

²*As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,*

*“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;*

³*the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:*

*‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”*

⁴*John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”*

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

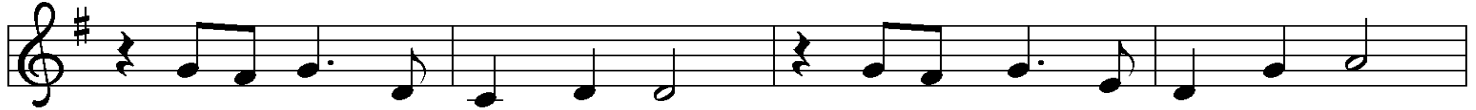
CONGREGATION ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER REQUESTS [The congregation may sit.]

[Pink prayer cards with your joys or concerns may be placed on the altar rail.]

SERMON – “No Room”

[The offering will be received during the singing of the following song.]

SONG – “Here I Am, Lord” [ELW 574, all verses]



1 “I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
2 “I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple’s pain.
3 “I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
Fin - est bread I will pro - vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.

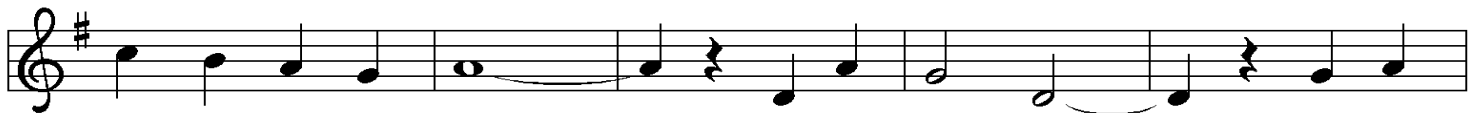


Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call - ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946

Music: HERE I AM, LORD, Daniel L. Schutte

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APOSTLES' CREED [Please stand.]

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 DAY [Please remain standing.]

Loving God, you teach us to keep nothing from you. We bring to you all our prayers, large and small, those heavy on our hearts and those known only to you.

We long to see your glory. Prepare our hearts for your arrival by healing divisions in your church. We pray for our Bishops, Elizabeth and Tracie, members of our committees and all who use their gifts to respond to your gracious love. Bless those who work for reconciliation within your church. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for your creation. Bring renewal to open spaces, parks, forests, mountains, and grasslands. Help us be responsible stewards, using the land you give us to be a blessing to the generations to come. Restore the creatures and lands that are damaged or destroyed. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We long for your peace. Make places of welcome for people fleeing violence. For nations facing conflict or crisis, deliver relief. For communities living with violence, bring healing and wholeness. We pray for all leaders of every government, especially Donald, the President; Cory and Robert, our senators; Josh, our Representative; and all civic leaders. Move every leader to bring fairness and peace for all. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Loving God, you teach us to keep nothing from you. We bring to you all our prayers, large and small, those heavy on our hearts and those known only to you. Stir up compassion in us for all who wait for you. We seek healing for all people who long for justice, freedom, and comfort. Sustain them in their time of need. Be with all who wait for you, who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. We lift up to you. . .

***Beverly Albert, Dolores Albert, Bill Caver, Kathy Cipoletti, Tony Conboy,
Peter Gluesing, Kim Herrera, Gerald Hoenes, Bo Hoag, Ken Huebner, Mae Hulburt,
Millie and Roger Hildebrand, Shiloh and Katherine Johnson, Gary Meserole,
Fred Messner, Holly Mullins, George Namendorf,
Meghan Otte, Anne Pangalo, Michael Pyne, Lorraine and Jack Sadlon,
Kristin Sapnar, Ellie Soehren, Nancy Sorbo, Nancy Sweet***

*Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.*

*O God of generosity, come into our hearts and minds. We give you thanks for Anna and Dominick Ricci, for the hearts they touched, the stories they shared, and the faithful witness they displayed throughout their lives. As we honor Dominick's birthday today in our worship and song, help us be good stewards of the generous gift they gave us. Bless the committee that oversees this gift. And inspire us to a use all that we have to love our neighbors and our world. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.*

HOLY COMMUNION

Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also 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.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

[The congregation may sit.]

HOLY COMMUNION

[All are invited to the Table where Christ is bodily present in the bread and drink.

At the direction of our ushers, everyone who is able kneels at the rail.

Bread will be distributed first (gluten free wafers are available),

followed by wine and grape juice in individual cups.

A chalice with wine is also available.

Children and all who have not received First Communion will receive a blessing.

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.]

[Please stand.]

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG – “King of Heaven” [Words and Music by Paul Baloché and Jason Ingram]

♩=110

F

C



1. Je - sus, let Your king-dom come here; - Let Your will be done.

5

Dm⁷

B^b2

F



here in us; Je - sus,

10

C

Dm⁷



there is no one great - er; You a-lone are Sav - ior;

14

B^b2

F

§

F



Show the world Your love. King of heav-en, come down;

18

C^{SUS}



King of heav - en, come now; Let Your glo - ry reign,

21

Dm⁷

B^b2

F



shin-ing like the day, King of heav-en, come. King of heav-en, rise

[Song continues on the following page.]

25

C^{sus}

— up; — Who can stand a-against — us; — You are strong to — save, —

29

Dm⁷

B^b2

2nd time to Coda ⊕

F

Fine

— in Your might - y — name, — King of heav - en, — come. —

33

F

C^{sus}

2. We — are chil-dren of Your mer - cy, — res-cued for Your — glo -

37

Dm⁷

B^b2

F

- ry; We cry Je - sus, set our hearts to - wards —

41

C^{sus}

Dm⁷

— You, — that ev - 'ry eye would see — You —

44

B^b2

F

D.S. al Coda

lift - ed high. King of heav - en, — come

⊕ Coda

47

F

F

C^{sus}

— King of heav - en, — come;

King of heav - en, come; King of heav - en,

67 C^{sus} Dm⁷

come; Oh, King of

70 B^{b2} D.S. al Fine

heav - en, come. King of heav - en, come

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

Does God need us to prepare the way of the Lord?

Today's reading from Isaiah is a text Christians see as pointing to the ministry John the Baptist did. God called a person to bring God's word of comfort and challenge to all of God's people. But this text is more than just a prediction of something that happened 600 years after it was written. It's a passage that also tells the story of a prophet preaching to the Jewish community in Exile. The Babylonian empire had destroyed Jerusalem, burned God's Temple, and forcibly relocated the survivors to what is now Iraq. The people felt abandoned because the war destroyed their homeland. They wondered where God was because it seemed as if God broke all of God's promises. Their faith, identity, and sense of self are in turmoil. And that's when God brings all of them a word of comfort and hope. At first, this new prophet wondered why they should preach at all. The people, the prophet proclaimed, are like grass and flowers - they might pay attention to God's word when it suits them but, eventually, they will turn away. God, however, responded by reminding the prophet of who God is. The value and worth of God's word does not depend on what people do once they hear it. Instead, God's word matters because it comes from God. And even in our moments when we feel abandoned and all alone, God is still with us and will never let us go.

There are times in our lives when we think we can convince God to something on our behalf. We bargain with God, making promises of our own. We tell God we'll go to church each week, hoping that we will be blessed. We promise to pray every night, and hope God will make a health crisis pass. We see a preacher on TV and send him money because he promises that God will reward us with more money than we give to him. And we sometimes act as if we can force Jesus' return if we make some kind of political or religious event happen. But does God, the creator of the universe, need us to do that? Can we truly bargain with the one who is the past, the present, and the future all at once? Our God isn't a God who believes in "pay-to-play" kind of realities. Our God, instead, just loves. Our God, instead, keeps God's promises. We worship, study, pray, and live generous lives because, in Christ, we discover that is exactly who God is. Jesus knows what it's like to feel abandoned. He knows what it's like when people don't believe the stories he shares. He knows what it's like when the powerful try to shut him down, refusing to listen to his experiences. He knows what it is like to cry out to God in pain, suffering, and hope. Jesus knows what it's like to be like us. The story of God isn't a story where people someone convince God to be on our side. God's story is about discovering how God is with us, no matter what. When we know Jesus, we see God more clearly. And when we live a Jesus-like life, we discover who God wants us to be.