



Christmas

TREES

A MIDWEEK ADVENT SERIES

Wednesday December 10, 2025

Abiding Word Evangelical Lutheran Church

Maineville, Ohio

Please stand

OPENING PRAYER

We rejoice, heavenly Father, that you have stirred up your might and have come to save us.

The eyes of our hearts turn toward Bethlehem, the birthplace of your Son, as the prophet Micah foretold.

As John the Baptist, still unborn, leapt with joy in the presence of your Son before his birth, help us also to recognize and rejoice in him as your Son and our promised Savior.

We joyfully receive the fulfillment of your prophecy.

In a most marvelous manner, you prepared a sacrifice for our sins in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

Send us your Holy Spirit that we may joyfully believe and receive this miracle of your love.

As we anticipate with joy the celebration of his birth,

Grant us your grace that we may see in him the greatness of your love for us. Amen.

CONFESSION OF SINS

We confess, almighty God, that we have wandered and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
We have followed our own ways and the desires of our hearts instead of your will and your way.

We have broken your commandments and neglected your righteous decrees.
We have offended you, our mighty and eternal God.

There is no health or righteousness in us.
O Lord, have mercy on us.

For the sake of your great mercy, O Lord, forgive us. Spare us the just punishment our sins deserve according to your promises declared to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.
And grant that for his sake, we may live sober, upright and godly lives to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

God, our heavenly Father, has taken away your guilt and punishment. Because of the innocent life and guiltless death of God's appointed Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ, he has forgiven you and restored you to the blessed status of his child. May God grant you peace and joy as you await his return from heaven to gather his people home.
Amen.

SEASONAL RESPONSE

The Lord will come again in glory. The Spirit and the Church cry out,
"Come, Lord Jesus. Come!" Please be Seated

Please be seated

READING

1 SAMUEL 16:1-13

1The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”

2But Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”

The LORD said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’
3Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.”

4Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”

5Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed stands here before the LORD.”

7But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

8Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.” 9Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the LORD chosen this one.” 10Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The LORD has not chosen these.” 11So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”

“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”

Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”

12So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.”

13So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM RESPONSES

Psalm 73

I am always with you, O LORD.

You hold me by my right hand.

You guide me with your counsel,

and afterward you will take me into glory.

Whom have I in heaven but you?

And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

My flesh and my heart may fail, **but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.**

Surely, it is God who saves me, I will trust in him and not be afraid.

For the LORD is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.

READING

MARK 1:1-18

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—“a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’” And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 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.

John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 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. 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!

THE SECOND ARTICLE (REDEMPTION)

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death. All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.

SERMON

ISAIAH 11:1-10

- ¹A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
- ²The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—
- ³and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
- ⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
- ⁵Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
- ⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
- ⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
- ⁹They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.
- ¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

Please stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

We lift up our souls to you, O Lord.

Open our hearts to know your ways and teach us your paths.

Lead us in your truth and teach us, for you are the God of our salvation.

Heavenly Father, we humbly pray, help us believe your promises.

As your Old Testament people waited eagerly for the advent of the Savior,

Help us with that same eagerness to welcome the Lord Jesus into our hearts by faith.

Lead us by your Holy Spirit to an understanding of our sinfulness and our need for repentance.

Help us to hate sin and love righteousness.

Be our strength in the hour of temptation and help us to serve you by bringing glory to your name.

Send the light of the Gospel to the ends of the earth that all may know your love in Jesus Christ.

Grant your abiding peace to all who worship you here today.

To those among us who are suffering, grant your strength so that they may bear their burdens in Christian hope and confidence.

Grant, O Lord, that our lips and lives will be a reflection of hearts that are truly thankful for your great mercy.

This we ask in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

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.

SONG OF SIMEON

Guide us waking, O Lord,
and guard us sleeping

that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep we may rest in peace.

In peace, Lord, you let your servants now depart according to your Word.
For our eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for every people,

A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.
Amen.

Let us praise the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please be seated

HYMN: CHRIST, THE WORD OF GOD INCARNATE
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BLESSING

The almighty and merciful Lord—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—bless us and keep us.
Amen.