



ADVENT WORSHIP  
DECEMBER 10, 2025

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SERBIN, TX

# LIGHTS

"Prepare!" is often the watchword of the season as the world gets ready for another celebration of Christmas. An integral part of any preparation is decoration. We see decorations everywhere this time of year. The world may not comprehend the real meaning of Christmas, but even secular preparations use many of the same decorations beloved by Christians—an appropriation we shouldn't mind at all, because these decorations point us to Christ. This year, as we look forward again to the coming of the Messiah, we take a fresh look at how the adornments of the season draw our eyes to Jesus, that we may more richly behold the love, peace, joy, and hope He comes to bring as this beauty is set before us.

Tonight, we focus on lights. You see them everywhere this time of year. Some neighborhoods even compete, and tourist destinations spend millions on attractive light displays. Like evergreens, this is something nonreligious people do this time of year without appreciating their true significance. Yet we know that Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). He came to restore righteousness to the world. This restoration continues to unfold through the ministry He has entrusted to His church. As Zechariah sang, "In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace" (*LSB*, Benedictus, Morning Prayer). We gather this evening to bask in the light of Jesus that His Word would have its way with us and so reflect His saving light into the darkness that remains in our world.

## **PRE-SERVICE MUSIC**

## **RINGING OF THE BELLS**

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

*Stand*

## **OPENING SENTENCES**

**PSALM 51:15; 70:1**

- P** O Lord, open my lips,
- C** and my mouth will declare Your praise.
- P** Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
- C** make haste to help me, O Lord.
- C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us.

## **PSALM**

**PSALM 118:15–29**

- P** The LORD is God, and He has made His light to shine upon us.
- C** Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!
- P** Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous:
- C** "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly,
- P** the right hand of the LORD exalts,

**C the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!"**

**P** I shall not die, but shall live,

**C and recount the deeds of the LORD.**

**P** The LORD has disciplined me severely,

**C but He has not given me over to death.**

**P** Open to me the gates of righteousness,

**C that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.**

**P** This is the gate of the LORD;

**C the righteous shall enter through it.**

**P** I thank You that You have answered me

**C and have become my salvation.**

**P** The stone that the builders rejected

**C has become the cornerstone.**

**P** This is the LORD's doing;

**C it is marvelous in our eyes.**

**P** This is the day that the LORD has made;

**C let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

**P** Save us, we pray, O LORD!

**C O LORD, we pray, give us success!**

**P** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!

**C We bless you from the house of the LORD.**

**P** The LORD is God, and He has made His light to shine upon  
us.

**C Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!**

**P** You are my God, and I will give thanks to You;

**C You are my God; I will extol You.**

**P** Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;

**C for His steadfast love endures forever!**

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

*Sit*

**HYMN: ♪"HARK THE GLAD SOUND"**

**LSB 349**

**1 Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
The Savior promised long;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne  
And ev'ry voice a song.**

**2 He comes the pris'ners to release,  
In Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before Him burst,  
The iron fetters yield.**

**3 He comes the broken heart to bind,  
The bleeding soul to cure,  
And with the treasures of His grace  
To enrich the humble poor.**

**4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
Thy welcome shall proclaim,  
And heav'n's eternal arches ring  
With Thy belovèd name.**

Text: Public domain

### **FIRST READING**

**ISAIAH 9:1–2, 6–7**

**P** A reading from Isaiah, the ninth chapter.

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time He brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time He has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. . . .

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C Thanks be to God.**

### **SECOND READING**

**2 CORINTHIANS 4:3–6**

**P** A reading from Second Corinthians, the fourth chapter.

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

### **THIRD READING**

**JOHN 1:1–9**

**P** A reading from John, the first chapter.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

#### **RESPONSORY FOR ADVENT**

**P** Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.

**C** This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

**P** In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.

**C** This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

**P** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

**C** This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

*Sit*

#### **HYMN: ♪“THE NIGHT WILL SOON BE ENDING”**

**LSB 337**

- 1 The night will soon be ending;  
The dawn cannot be far.  
Let songs of praise ascending  
Now greet the Morning Star!  
All you whom darkness frightens  
With guilt or grief or pain,  
God’s radiant Star now brightens  
And bids you sing again.
- 2 The One whom angels tended  
Comes near, a child, to serve;  
Thus God, the judge offended,  
Bears all our sins deserve.  
The guilty need not cower,  
For God has reconciled  
Through His redemptive power  
All those who trust this child.
- 3 The earth in sure rotation  
Will soon bring morning bright,  
So run where God’s salvation  
Glows in a stable’s light.  
As old as sin’s perversion  
Is mercy’s vast design:  
God brings a new creation—  
This child its seal and sign.

4 Yet nights will bring their sadness  
And rob our hearts of peace,  
And sin in all its madness  
Around us may increase.  
But now one Star is beaming  
Whose rays have pierced the night:  
God comes for our redeeming  
From sin's oppressive might.

5 God dwells with us in darkness  
And makes the night as day;  
Yet we resist the brightness  
And turn from God away.  
But grace does not forsake us,  
However far we run.  
God claims us still as children  
Through Mary's infant Son.

Text: © 1998 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005097

**SERMON: "LIGHTS"**

By Pastor John Schmidt

*Stand*

**P** The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.  
**G** Amen.

**OFFERTORY**

**G** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

**ANTIPHON**

**P** Let my prayer rise before You as incense,  
**G** and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

**MAGNIFICAT**

**P** My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior;  
**G** for He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.  
**P** For behold, from this day all generations will call me blessed.  
**G** For the Mighty One has done great things to me, and holy is His name;  
**P** and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.  
**G** He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

- P** He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted the lowly.
- C** **He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away.**
- P** He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.
- C** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*Sit*

## OFFERING

*As offerings are brought forward the congregation stands and sings.*

### OFFERING HYMN: *J*“WE GIVE THEE BUT THINE OWN”

**LSB 781 V.1 & 2**

**1 We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.**

**2 May we Thy bounties thus As stewards true receive  
And gladly, as Thou blessest us, To Thee our firstfruits give!**

Text: William W. How, 1823–97 Text: Public domain

## KYRIE

**C** Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

## LORDS 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.

## COLLECTS

**P** O Lord, hear my prayer.

**C** **And let my cry come to You.**

**P** For eyes to behold the Father's hand in all creation, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For awareness of beauty and the living traditions of the church that bring Christ to our eyes through arts and crafts, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** That we may see the signs of Christ's return even as we celebrate His birth, and encourage one another all the more as we see the Day drawing near, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** That we may be living testimonies of new life in Christ through our loving service to our neighbor—both in word and in deed—let us pray to the Lord:

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**P** That we may be thankful for the bountiful harvest we enjoy amid the many festivities of this season, and be generous to the poor, let us pray to the Lord:

**G Lord, have mercy.**

**P** That we may love one another as God so loved us, forgive one another, and work together in the unity we have in Christ Jesus, let us pray to the Lord:

**G Lord, have mercy.**

**P** That we may not be lured into temptation or despair or be distracted by the false Christmases around us, but always hold the true meaning of Christmas in our hearts, let us pray to the Lord:

**G Lord, have mercy.**

**P** 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.

**G Amen.**

**P** Lord of light and life, You came into our world to remove sin and restore us to righteousness. Shine Your light anew into our hearts and cleanse us from all the deceiving evils that lurk within them, that we may live without fear of this world but joyfully anticipate Your glorious return; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G Amen.**

**P** Father of lights, every good and perfect gift comes from You. Thank You for sending Your Son to bring the light of life into the world and shining it into our hearts through the Gospel. Give us Your Spirit to hold us fast as we walk through dark places that remain in our world. Grant that our faith not grow dim but, by Your grace, glow in us through our final journey—that we may radiate Your goodness and glory each day and many may join us in Your light and also walk with You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G Amen.**

### **COLLECT FOR PEACE**

**P** O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G Amen.**

### **BENEDICAMUS**

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

**G Thanks be to God.**

### **BENEDICTION**

**P** The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**G Amen.**



**HYMN: ♪“O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL”**

**LSB 357:1, 6**

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear. *Refrain***

*Refrain*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**6 O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain***

Text: Public domain

**SILENT PRAYER**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

© 2025 Concordia Publishing House. Scripture: ESV®. Permission granted to purchaser to reproduce this page for use in congregational settings. All other rights reserved.