



ADVENT WORSHIP  
DECEMBER 3, 2025

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SERBIN, TX

## EVERGREENS

"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 evergreens. Perhaps the most innocuous decorations in the eyes of the world, their prickles remind us of the crown of thorns, and the berries of the holly evoke the blood-stained brow of our crucified Lord. Above all, the steadfastness of their green in the midst of death symbolizes life amid death—and the life eternal Jesus won for us on the cross.

### **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 92**

- P** The righteous flourish like the palm tree
- C** **and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.**
- P** It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
- C** **to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;**
- P** to declare Your steadfast love in the morning,
- C** **and Your faithfulness by night,**
- P** to the music of the lute and the harp,
- C** **to the melody of the lyre.**
- P** For You, O LORD, have made me glad by Your work;
- C** **at the works of Your hands I sing for joy.**
- P** How great are Your works, O LORD!
- C** **Your thoughts are very deep!**
- P** The stupid man cannot know; the fool cannot understand this:

**C** that though the wicked sprout like grass and all evildoers flourish,

**P** they are doomed to destruction forever; but You, O LORD,

**C** are on high forever.

**P** For behold, Your enemies, O LORD, for behold, Your enemies shall perish;

**C** all evildoers shall be scattered.

**P** But You have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;

**C** You have poured over me fresh oil.

**P** My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;

**C** my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants.

**P** The righteous flourish like the palm tree

**C** and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

**P** They are planted in the house of the LORD;

**C** they flourish in the courts of our God.

**P** They still bear fruit in old age;

**C** they are ever full of sap and green,

**P** to declare that the LORD is upright;

**C** He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. 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: ♪“COME, THOU PRECIOUS RANSOM, COME”**

**LSB 350**

1 Come, Thou precious Ransom, come,  
Only hope for sinful mortals!  
Come, O Savior of the world!  
Open are to Thee all portals.  
Come, Thy beauty let us see;  
Anxiously we wait for Thee.

2 Enter now my waiting heart,  
Glorious King and Lord most holy.  
Dwell in me and ne'er depart,  
Though I am but poor and lowly.  
Ah, what riches will be mine  
When Thou art my guest divine!

3 My hosannas and my palms  
Graciously receive, I pray Thee;  
Evermore, as best I can,  
Savior, I will homage pay Thee,  
And in faith I will embrace,  
Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.

**4 Hail! Hosanna, David's Son!**  
**Jesus, hear our supplication!**  
**Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown,**  
**Bring us blessing and salvation,**  
**That forever we may sing:**  
**Hail! Hosanna to our King.**

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## **FIRST READING**

**HOSEA 14:4-8**

**P** A reading from Hosea, the fourteenth chapter.

I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for My anger has turned from them. I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon. They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow; they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine; their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon. O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like an evergreen cypress; from Me comes your fruit.

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

**C Thanks be to God.**

## **SECOND READING**

**REVELATION 22:1-5**

**P** A reading from Revelation, the twenty-second chapter.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

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

**C Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## **THIRD READING**

**JOHN 11:17-27**

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

Now when Jesus came, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met Him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is 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 TREE OF LIFE"**

**LSB 561**

- 1** The tree of life with ev'ry good  
In Eden's holy orchard stood,  
And of its fruit so pure and sweet  
God let the man and woman eat.  
Yet in this garden also grew  
Another tree, of which they knew;  
Its lovely limbs with fruit adorned  
Against whose eating God had warned.
- 2** The stillness of that sacred grove  
Was broken, as the serpent strove  
With tempting voice Eve to beguile  
And Adam too by sin defile.  
O day of sadness when the breath  
Of fear and darkness, doubt and death,  
Its awful poison first displayed  
Within the world so newly made.
- 3** What mercy God showed to our race,  
A plan of rescue by His grace:  
In sending One from woman's seed,  
The One to fill our greatest need—  
For on a tree uplifted high  
His only Son for sin would die,  
Would drink the cup of scorn and dread  
To crush the ancient serpent's head!

**4 Now from that tree of Jesus' shame  
Flows life eternal in His name;  
For all who trust and will believe,  
Salvation's living fruit receive.  
And of this fruit so pure and sweet  
The Lord invites the world to eat,  
To find within this cross of wood  
The tree of life with ev'ry good.**

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**SERMON: "EVERGREENS"**

By Pastor John Schmidt

*Stand*

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

**OFFERTORY**

- [C]** 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,  
**[C]** 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;  
**[C]** for He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.  
**[P]** For behold, from this day all generations will call me blessed.  
**[C]** 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.  
**[C]** 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: ♪“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

**PREFACE**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** ♪ **And with thy spirit.**

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** ♪ **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

**P** Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

**C** ♪ **It is meet and right so to do.**

**P** It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**SANCTUS**

**C** ♪ **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; heav’n and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**P** 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.

**C** ♪ **For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

**PAX DOMINI**

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** ♪ **Amen.**

**AGNUS DEI**

**C** ♪ **O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.**

*Sit*

## **DISTRIBUTION**

### **DISTRIBUTION HYMN: ♪“COMFORT, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE”**

**LSB 347**

- 1   “Comfort, comfort ye My people,  
      Speak ye peace,” thus saith our God;  
      “Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
      Mourning ’neath their sorrows’ load.  
      Speak ye to Jerusalem  
      Of the peace that waits for them;  
      Tell her that her sins I cover  
      And her warfare now is over.”**
- 2   Yea, her sins our God will pardon,  
      Blotting out each dark misdeed;  
      All that well deserved His anger  
      He no more will see or heed.  
      She hath suffered many\_a day,  
      Now her griefs have passed away;  
      God will change her pining sadness  
      Into ever-springing gladness.**
- 3   Hark, the herald’s voice is crying  
      In the desert far and near,  
      Calling sinners to repentance,  
      Since the Kingdom now is here.  
      O that warning cry obey!  
      Now prepare for God a way;  
      Let the valleys rise to meet Him  
      And the hills bow down to greet Him.**
- 4   Make ye straight what long was crooked;  
      Make the rougher places plain.  
      Let your hearts be true and humble,  
      As befits His holy reign.  
      For the glory of the Lord  
      Now o’er earth is shed abroad,  
      And all flesh shall see the token  
      That His Word is never broken.**

Text: Public domain



- 1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!  
Behold, the King of glory waits.  
The King of kings is drawing near;  
The Savior of the world is here.  
Life and salvation He doth bring;  
Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.  
To God the Father raise  
Your joyful songs of praise.**
- 2 A righteous Helper comes to thee;  
His chariot is humility,  
His kingly crown is holiness,  
His scepter, pity in distress.  
The end of all our woe He brings;  
Therefore the earth is glad and sings.  
To Christ the Savior raise  
Your grateful hymns of praise.**
- 3 How blest the land, the city blest,  
Where Christ the ruler is confessed!  
O peaceful hearts and happy homes  
To whom this King in triumph comes!  
The cloudless sun of joy is He  
Who comes to set His people free.  
To God the Spirit raise  
Your happy shouts of praise.**
- 4 Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
Make it a temple set apart  
From earthly use for heav’n’s employ,  
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.  
So shall your Sov’reign enter in  
And new and nobler life begin.  
To God alone be praise  
For word and deed and grace!**
- 5 Redeemer, come and open wide  
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!  
O enter with Thy grace divine;  
Thy face of mercy on me shine.  
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on  
Until our glorious goal is won.  
Eternal praise and fame  
We offer to Thy name.**

- 1 O Lord, how shall I meet You,  
How welcome You aright?  
Your people long to greet You,  
My hope, my heart's delight!  
O kindle, Lord most holy,  
Your lamp within my breast  
To do in spirit lowly  
All that may please You best.
- 2 Your Zion strews before You  
Green boughs and fairest palms;  
And I too will adore You  
With joyous songs and psalms.  
My heart shall bloom forever  
For You with praises new  
And from Your name shall never  
Withhold the honor due.
- 3 I lay in fetters, groaning;  
You came to set me free.  
I stood, my shame bemoaning;  
You came to honor me.  
A glorious crown You give me,  
A treasure safe on high  
That will not fail or leave me  
As earthly riches fly.
- 4 Love caused Your incarnation;  
Love brought You down to me.  
Your thirst for my salvation  
Procured my liberty.  
Oh, love beyond all telling,  
That led You to embrace  
In love, all love excelling,  
Our lost and fallen race.
- 5 Sin's debt, that fearful burden,  
Cannot His love erase;  
Your guilt the Lord will pardon  
And cover by His grace.  
He comes, for you procuring  
The peace of sin forgiv'n,  
His children thus securing  
Eternal life in heav'n.

**6 He comes to judge the nations,  
A terror to His foes,  
A light of consolations  
And blessed hope to those  
Who love the Lord's appearing.  
O glorious Sun, now come,  
Send forth Your beams so cheering,  
And guide us safely home.**

Text: Public domain

*Stand*

### **NUNC DIMITTIS**

**G♯♪ Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

### **THANKSGIVING**

**P** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,

**G♯♪ and His mercy endureth forever.**

**P** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G♯♪ Amen.**

### **SALUTATION AND BENEDICAMUS**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**G♯♪ And with thy spirit.**

**P** Bless we the Lord.

**G♯♪ Thanks be to God.**

### **BENEDICTION**

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

**G♯♪ Amen, amen, amen.**

### **CLOSING HYMN: ♪"O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL"**

**LSB 357 V.1, 4**

**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!**

**4 O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,  
Free them from Satan's tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain***

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## ***SILENT PRAYER***

## ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

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