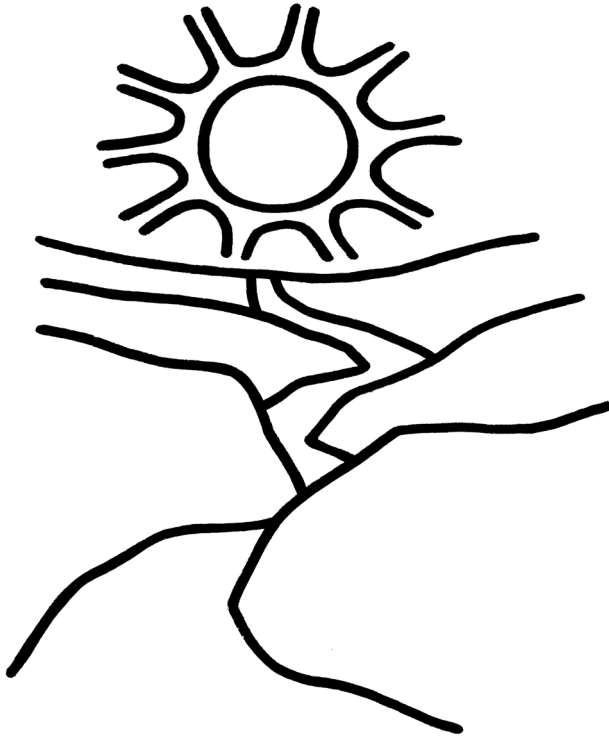


SUNDAY- DECEMBER 10, 2023-9:00 AM



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MT. HOREB

*A family in faith, reaching out to share in God's love
with all people.*

MINISTERS
PASTOR
INTERIM

ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH
JOHN TWITON
ZACH SMIRIS

ELC@MHTC.NET - 608-437-5012

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Sunday, December 10, 2023 | 3rd Sunday of Advent | 9:00 AM

(+ = stand if able; L = Leader / **C** = Congregation)

PRELUDE Diane Dangerfield

WELCOMING WORD *"Rejoice always," begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. "All God's children got a robe," go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God's party.*

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN:

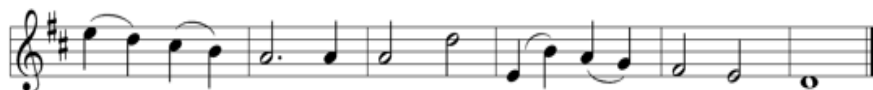
Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates



1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold, the
2 Oh, blest the land, the cit - y blest, where Christ the
3 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a
4 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to
5 So come, my Sov - 'reign; en - ter in! Let new and



King of glo - ry waits! The King of kings is
rul - er is con - fessed! Oh, hap - py hearts and
tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for
thee: here, Lord, a - bide! Let me thy in - ner
no - bler life be - gin; thy Ho - ly Spir - it



draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.
hap - py homes to whom this King in tri - umph comes!
heav'n's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
pres - ence feel: thy grace and love in me re - veal.
guide us on, un - til the glo - rious crown be won.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

L: Long ago, the prophet told the people:
Rejoice greatly! Shout out loud!
Your king comes on a donkey – not to rule, but to serve.

**All: Jesus, our Brother and our Friend,
We name your birth Joy to the World.
We say your coming is good news –
freedom for the oppressed, release for the captive.**

L: You come at Christmastime
and we remember you meet us come every day,
in each stranger and neighbor, if only we let you in.

**All: We light this candle, and we pray:
May joy light the world this Christmas.**

CHRISTMAS CAROL: #267 “Joy to the World” (vs. 1& 2)

GREETING

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also, with you.

+ KYRIE pg. 138

+ HYMN OF PRAISE pg. 139 “Glory to God in the Highest...”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God,

C: and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Congregational Songs:

*How Far Is It to Bethlehem?
Holy is the Lord*

FIRST READING: Luke 1:46b-55

And Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord,⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵
according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his
descendants forever.'

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all
circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do
not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but
test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of
evil. ²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may
your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and
he will do this.

+ACCLAMATION (pg. 142)

**(sing) Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

L: The Gospel according to John, Chapter 1,

C: Glory to you, O Lord

GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a
witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He
himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ¹⁹This is the
testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from
Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it,
but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then?
Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered,
"No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for
those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said, "I am the
voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the
Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the
Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are
neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them,
"I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know,
²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of
his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John
was baptizing.

+L: The Gospel of the Lord

+C: Praise to you, O Christ

CHOIR ANTHEM: "What Child is This"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

MESSAGE Intern Zach Smirris

+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN:

#250 – *“Blessed Be the God of Israel”*

+APOSTLES’ CREED pg. 105

BENEVOLENCE

OFFERING –

MUSIC – *We Have Seen the Messiah*

OFFERTORY #186 *“Create in me....”*

THE PRAYERS (pg. 143)

(As the pastor concludes each petition with the words:

“Lord in your mercy...” The people respond: **Hear our prayer.**.)

+THE LORD’S PRAYER (pg. 145) (right hand column)

SENDING

COMMUNITY WORD

+BLESSING

L: May the blessing of God our creator, the love of Jesus Christ our redeemer, and the presence of the Holy Spirit the comforter, surround you and sustain you until we gather again.

C: Amen.

+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN:

#270 – *“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”*

+DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

WE WELCOME ALL TO ELC!

Everyone. Without exception. Regardless of race, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, faith traditions, physical or mental abilities, financial resources, family status, or personal struggles. We are committed to being an anti-racist community. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we will work to extend God’s grace, love, justice, and dignity. You belong here. Your story and your life are valuable. In Christ’s love, we welcome you.

DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 10, 2023

SHARE: What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

READ: Read the daily readings to deepen your understanding:

Monday, Psalm 125, God's People Secure in God

Tuesday, Acts 3:17- 4:4, Peter in Solomon's Portico

Wednesday, Mark 9:9-13, The Coming of Elijah

Thursday, Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26, God's Covenant with David

Friday, Hebrews 1:5-14, The Son is Superior to Angels

Saturday, John 7:40-52, Division Among the People

TALK: Consider some of these ideas:

“There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John.” - John 1:6

John's gospel describes Jesus as the “light of the world.” John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

- There is no shortage of oppressed, brokenhearted and captive. Who needs comfort, liberty this week? (Isa 61:1-3)
- Can you remember a time when your weeping turned to shouts of joy? (Ps 126:6)
- When have you taken the opportunity to identify with Christ when asked, “Who are you?” (John 1:19, 22)

PRAY: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESS: God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.