

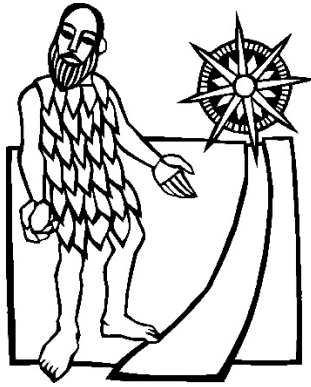
# **SATURDAY- DECEMBER 13TH, 2025 -5:00 PM**

## **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MT. HOREB**

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

### **WELCOMING WORD**

*A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.*



### **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.*

MINISTERS  
INTERIM PASTOR

ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH  
KAREN HOFSTAD



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# ORDER OF WORSHIP

Saturday, December 13, 2025 | Third Sunday of Advent | 5:00 p.m.

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

**PRELUDE** Ruth Heinecke

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

**C: Amen.**

L: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

L: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

L: Long-expected God,

**C: We confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised.**  
**Amen.**

L: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

**C: Amen.**

**CONGREGATIONAL HYMN #244 Rejoice, Rejoice Believers**

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

### 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.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way;

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 35:1-10**

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." <sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; <sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. <sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. <sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. <sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**James 5:7-10**

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

## **GOSPEL**

**Matthew 11:2-11**

<sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." <sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is

the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' <sup>11</sup> "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

+L: The Gospel of the Lord.

**+C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**MESSAGE** Pastor Karen Hofstad

**+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN #250 Blessed Be the God of Israel**

**+APOSTLES' CREED** pg. 105

**INSTALLATION OF CHURCH COUNCIL**

**+THE PRAYERS** pg. 152

(As the leader concludes each petition with the words:

"Lord in your mercy..." The people respond: Hear our prayer.")

**SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**BENEVOLENCE**

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY #184 - Let the Vineyards....**

**+ OFFERING PRAYER**

L: Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

**C: Amen.**

**+THE LORD'S PRAYER** pg. 154 (right hand column)

**COMMUNITY WORD**

**+BLESSING**

L: May God who comes among us, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

**C: Amen.**

**+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN #270 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

**+DISMISSAL**

L: Go in peace. Keep awake. Christ is Coming!

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**"I am God's child, deserving of love and respect, and God  
will use me to change the world."**

## **DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 14, 2025**

**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 42, Longing for God's Help

**Tuesday,** Jude 17-25, Warnings and Exhortations

**Wednesday,** Zechariah 8:1-17, God's Promises to Zion

**Thursday,** Psalm 80:1-7; 17-19, Prayer for Restoration

**Friday,** 2 Samuel 7:18-22, David's Prayer

**Saturday,** John 3:31-36, The One Who Comes from Heaven

**TALK:** Consider some of these ideas:

***"The blind receives their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed,  
the deaf hear, the dead are raised,  
and the poor have good news brought to them." -- Matthew 11:7***

*John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.*

- Isaiah paints God's redemption as a dangerous desert made lush and safe. What image would you use? (Isa 35:6-9)
- Would you live differently today if you thought the Lord was coming tomorrow? Why or why not? (James 5:7-9)
- If someone asked you, "Is Jesus the one?" what evidence would you point to that he is God's chosen? (Matt 11:3)

**PRAY:** Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you 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.

***If you would like more information about ELC of Mount Horeb  
please fill out the visitor cards in the pew pads  
which are passed during offering***