

# **SUNDAY- DECEMBER 21ST, 2025 -9:00 AM**

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

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

### **WELCOMING WORD**

**Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us.**

**During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.**



### **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  
PASTOR

ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH  
KAREN HOFSTAD



# ORDER OF WORSHIP

Sunday, December 21, 2025 | Fourth Sunday of Advent | 9:00 AM

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

**PRELUDE** Diane Dangerfield

**+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN #264** *Prepare the Royal Highway*  
(vs. 1, 3, 4)

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

**+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.

**GREETING**

**+KYRIE** pg. 147

**+HYMN OF PRAISE** pg. 149 *"This is the feast ..."*

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

## **CONGREGATIONAL SONGS** *Prepare the Way How Far is it to Bethlehem*

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 7:10-16**

<sup>10</sup> The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." <sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

**Romans 1:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, <sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**+ACCLAMATION** pg. 151

**(sing) Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

+L: The Gospel according to Matthew, Chapter 1.

**+C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **GOSPEL**

**Matthew 1:18-25**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in

her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

+L: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

**SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM** *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** Pastor Karen Hofstad

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**+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN #272** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*  
(vs. 1, 2)

**+NICENE CREED** pg. 104

**+THE PRAYERS** pg. 152

The leader concludes each petition with the words:

“Lord in your mercy...”

**The people respond: Hear our prayer.”**

**+SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**OFFERING PRAISE TEAM** *Light of the Stable*

**+OFFERTORY #184** *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

**+OFFERING PRAYER**

**+THE GREAT THANKSGIVING** pg. 152

**+WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

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

**CONGREGATIONAL HYMN 279** *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**COMMUNITY WORD**

**+BLESSING**

**+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN #290** *Go, Tell it on the Mountain*

**+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.”**

*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.*

## DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 21, 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,** 1 Samuel 2:1-10, Hannah's Prayer

**Tuesday,** Genesis 21:1-21, The Birth of Isaac

**Wednesday,** Genesis 37:2-11, Joseph's Dream

**Thursday,** Luke 1:46b-55, Mary's Song

**Friday,** Galatians 3:6-14, The Righteous Live by Faith

**Saturday,** Isaiah 9:2-7, The Coming King

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

***"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"  
which means, "God is with us." -- Matthew 1:21***

*Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."*

- Have you ever asked God for a sign? If not, why? If so, did you receive it? How did it change you? (Isa 7:11)
- Paul says he is "called to be an apostle." What calling could you name when you introduce yourself? (Rom 1:1)
- The prophet says the Messiah will be called Emmanuel, "God with us." How does the name speak to you? (Matt 1:23)

**PRAY:** Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come with your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, 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.