

**ADVENT MIDWEEK 1**

December 3, 2025 7 pm

**EVERGREENS****THEME OF THE DAY**

“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.

**WELCOME** – Pastor Christopher Fairbairn**INVOCATION****P** In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.**C** Amen.

## VERSICLES AND GLORIA PATRI

*Isaiah 40:3b,c, 5; Psalm 118:26***P** Prepare the way of the LORD;**C** make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**P** Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!**C** We bless you from the house of the LORD.**P** And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,**C** and all flesh shall see it together.**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.**350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come**

1 Come, Thou pre - cious Ran - som, come, On - ly hope for  
 2 En - ter now my wait - ing heart, Glo - rious King and  
 3 My ho - san - nas and my palms Gra - cious - ly re -  
 4 Hail! Ho - san - na, Da - vid's Son! Je - sus, hear our



sin - ful mor - tals! Come, O Sav - ior of the world!  
 Lord most ho - ly. Dwell in me and ne'er de - part,  
 ceive, I pray Thee; Ev - er - more, as best I can,  
 sup - pli - ca - tion! Let Thy king - dom, scep - ter, crown,



O - pen are to Thee all por - tals. Come, Thy beau - ty  
 Though I am but poor and low - ly. Ah, what rich - es  
 Sav - ior, I will hom - age pay Thee, And in faith I  
 Bring us bless - ing and sal - va - tion, That for - ev - er



let us see; Anx - ious - ly we wait for Thee.  
 will be mine When Thou art my guest di - vine!  
 will em - brace, Lord, Thy mer - it through Thy grace.  
 we may sing: Hail! Ho - san - na to our King.

## SALUTATION

- P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And also with you.

## PRAYER

- P** Let us pray.  
 Lord of all beauty, You made the heavens and the earth; the world and all its fullness are Yours. Thank You for giving us life and filling creation with signs that declare Your glory. As we behold beautiful evergreens this season, fix our eyes on their thorny leaves and red berries that we may give thanks for the crown Your Son wore and the cross He bore for us. Abide in us always, as we abide in Your Word and take heart in the promise of eternal life with Jesus, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.
- C** Amen.

## FIRST READING

*Hosea 14:4–8*

- R** A reading from Hosea, the fourteenth chapter.

<sup>4</sup>I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely,  
 for My anger has turned from them.  
<sup>5</sup>I will be like the dew to Israel;  
 he shall blossom like the lily;  
 he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon;  
<sup>6</sup>his shoots shall spread out;  
 his beauty shall be like the olive,  
 and his fragrance like Lebanon.  
<sup>7</sup>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.  
<sup>8</sup>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.

- R** O Lord, have mercy on us.  
**C** Thanks be to God.

## RESPONSIVE READING

*John 15:5–11*

- P** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- C** **If anyone does not abide in Me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.**
- P** If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
- C** **By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples.**
- P** As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love.
- C** **If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.**
- P** These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you,
- C** **and that your joy may be full.**

## SECOND READING

*John 11:17–27*

- R** A reading from John, the eleventh chapter.

<sup>17</sup>Now when Jesus came, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. <sup>18</sup>Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, <sup>19</sup>and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. <sup>20</sup>So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met Him, but Mary remained seated in the house. <sup>21</sup>Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup>But even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You." <sup>23</sup>Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." <sup>24</sup>Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." <sup>25</sup>Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, <sup>26</sup>and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" <sup>27</sup>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

*Revelation 22:1–2; Psalm 92:12–15*

- P** 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.
- C** **The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**
- P** The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the LORD, they flourish in the courts of our God.
- C** **The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**
- P** They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.
- C** **The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**

**331 The Advent of Our King**

- 1 The ad - vent of our King Our prayers must now em - ploy,  
 2 The ev - er - last - ing Son In - car - nate deigns to be,  
 3 O Zi - on's daugh - ter, rise To meet your low - ly King,  
 4 As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come a - gain



And we must hymns of wel-come sing In strains of ho - ly joy.  
 Him-self a ser - vant's form puts on To set His ser - vants free.  
 Nor let your faith - less heart de - spise The peace He comes to bring.  
 And His true mem - bers all u - nite With Him in heav'n to reign.

- 5 Before the dawning day  
 Let sin's dark deeds be gone,  
 The sinful self be put away,  
 The new self now put on.

## SERMON

## OFFERING

## 781 We Give Thee But Thine Own



1 We give Thee but Thine own, What-e'er the gift may be;  
 2 May we Thy boun - ties thus As stew - ards true re - ceive



All that we have is Thine a - lone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.  
 And glad - ly, as Thou bless - est us, To Thee our first-fruits give!

## LORD'S PRAYER

**P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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.**

## ADVENT LITANY

*Hebrews 10:25*

**P** In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**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:
- C** **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:
- C** **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:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**

## CLOSING PRAYER

- P** Lord of life,
- C** **You sent Your Son to bring back to life all the children of Adam.**
- P** Grant that we may view the evergreens of this season through the eyes of faith
- C** **so that in a world still filled with death we may be of good courage, knowing that, just as the evergreen prevails over death in winter, we prevail over the winter of our sin and will rise to life eternal on the Last Day;**
- P** through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

*John 15:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:16–17*

**P** These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you,

**C** **and that your joy may be full.**

**P** Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

**C** **Amen.**

**357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

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

4 Oh, come, Thou Key of David, come,  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high  
And close the path to misery.  
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel**  
**Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**WHERE WE SERVE***Preacher**Rev. Christopher Fairbairn**Officiant**Rev. James Frusti**Music Director**Paul Ventimiglia**Family Life Director**Jeanette Koch**Elder**Mark Baumgarten**Ushers**Gary Cash**Jeff Henning**Mike Williamson*