



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND STUDENT CENTER

First Midweek Advent Service

“God with us” Advent Series

December 3, 2025

7:00 p.m

WEEK 1- OUR POTTER—

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PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

WELCOME

THE OPENING HYMN “Lift up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

LSB 341

THE INVOCATION AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

- P** We are in the first week of Advent that helps us recall the hope we have in Christ. In the Covenant, God told Abraham that through him all the nations of the world would be blessed. Because of that Covenant, Abraham trusted and put his hope in God. The Old Testament spoke of the coming of the Messiah, the Christ. The promised Savior would be born a king in the line of King David. He would rule the world wisely and bless all the nations. We, too, hope in God’s promise to send the Messiah again to this world to establish his kingdom forever.

(An acolyte lights the first candle.)

The gift of hope is our light shining in a dark place. As we look at the light of this candle we celebrate the hope we have in Jesus Christ. Paul tells us: "... we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:3-5).

With Abraham and Sarah and all the ancestors of old, we call you Father. Your love is revealed to us in the New Covenant, given by Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of David. Help us prepare to celebrate his birth, to make our hearts ready and to place our hope in you. Help us celebrate your promise of forgiveness and life as we seek your strength to do your will by sharing your hope with others. We ask it in the name of the true gift of life, the Child born in Bethlehem. Amen.

THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Please join me in Confessing our sins:

C Loving Father, who sent Jesus as Savior of the world, we confess that our busy doing and decorating have shrouded our Advent and caused us to close our eyes to the Christ Child. Forgive us for shaping the celebration to fit our desires. Seize us by your Spirit. Focus our eyes and hearts on the coming Christ. Inspire us with your gift, so that we shout from the housetops the Good News that in the coming Savior God is indeed with us. Make us into your joy-filled messengers, sharing your powerful message of salvation for all.

P Jesus has promised that the sins we forgive on earth will also be forgiven in heaven. Trusting that precious promise, as a called and ordained minister of the Gospel, I confidently declare to you that, in Jesus Christ, all of your sins are forgiven and you are privileged to share that same forgiveness with all the others in your life. We are filled with Jesus' light of life so that we can shine among the people of this world like stars in the sky.

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

P A voice cries out, "In the wilderness clear a way for the Lord;

C make a way in the desert, a road for our God.

P Every valley must be lifted up, and every mountain and hill leveled.

C The rough places will become a level plain, the rugged land a wide valley.

P The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it at the same time.

C For the Lord has decreed it."

P "Go up on a high mountain, O herald Zion!

C Shout out loudly, O herald Jerusalem! Shout, don't be afraid!

P Say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God!'"

C "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.

P And they shall call his name Immanuel (which means God with us)."

C "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** God our Father and Creator, we lie in your hands like unformed clay. We have nothing in ourselves that can shape our lives and our future. “But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us” (2 Corinthians 4:7). Form us, Lord, into willing clay jars that can carry the light of God in us. Send us to offer your presence and power to those around us. In Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 64:1-9

Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence—as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, and that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome things that we did not look for, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him. You meet him who joyfully works righteousness, those who remember you in your ways. Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved? We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Be not so terribly angry, O Lord, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people.

EPISTLE LESSON

2 Timothy 2: 20-21

Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 6:35-40

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

THE SERMON “OUR POTTER”

Rev. Marty Marks

THE PRAYERS

- P** Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead and Christ will give you light. Let us pray that the light of Christ will be our continual guide in all our daily actions. Lord, in your mercy,
- C** Hear our prayer.
- P** Cast away the works of darkness and fill us with the treasure of your light. Let us pray that the

light of Christ will illuminate our foolish and sinful ways, and give us true repentance for our sins. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P You created us to be the ones filled with your presence and shaped according to your will so that we will share the treasure of your indwelling Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P You are the light of the world, and so let your light shine through us to all. Let us pray that the light of Christ will give us a greater vision and make us communities of light. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P “Because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death” (Luke 1:78-79), Let us pray that the light of Christ will shine through us and enter the hearts of all who live in grief, despair, deprivation and depression. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Light has come into the world, but those who do evil hate the light. Let us pray that the light of Christ will shine through us and inflame the hearts of all those who prefer to live in darkness and ignore the truth as revealed in the Babe of Bethlehem and the Christ at Calvary in his loving and sacrificial death for all. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P The Lord will be in us and be our everlasting light, and our days of mourning shall be ended. Let us pray that the light of Christ, shining in his resurrection, will brighten our paths when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death and in our last moments on earth. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

♫ **CLOSING HYMN: “COME, THOU PRECIOUS RANSON”**

--LSB 350

THE BENEDICTION

THE OFFERING (AT THE DOOR)

TONIGHT’S PARTICIPANTS

♦ **LITURGIST: REV. MARTY MARKS**

♦ **ORGANIST: LINDA CONRAD**

♦ **PIANIST/VOCALIST: C-J MOTISI**