

Sermon Notes

4th Sunday of Advent
Jesus and St. Joseph



Gerard van Honthorst (1620)

Holy Cross Lutheran Church – LC-MS

6905 Greenbelt Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Phone: (301) 345-5111 Fax: (301) 220-0694

Email: myholycross@verizon.net Website: www.myholycross.org

www.facebook.com/holycrossgreenbelt

Stephen H. Mentz, *Pastor*

Rev. Suah S. Deddeh, *Assistant Pastor of Welcoming & Outreach*

Roberto Vela, Esq., *Organist*

Welcome!

We thank God for this time together! If you are worshipping with us for the first time this morning, we extend a very special welcome to Holy Cross. We are happy and grateful that you have joined us to worship God and celebrate His love. Please be sure to fill out the attendance slip and receive our invitation to come worship with us again. May God bless your worship with us, and please be assured that your presence among us is a blessing.

Celebration of Communion

Lutherans believe that in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ are received with the Bread and Wine for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of our faith. Baptized Christians who confess their sins to God, desire to live a new life in Jesus Christ, and affirm this statement of faith, are invited to celebrate this Sacrament with us. If you have any questions regarding Communion, please speak with Pastor. We also invite children to come forward to receive a blessing.

+ The Fourth Sunday of Advent +

December 23, 2018 at 9:30 a.m.

Prelude

STAND

✧ *In acknowledgement of our Lord's presence and as a reminder of His work on our behalf, please turn and face the Processional Cross as it is carried in.* ✧

Processional Hymn

Behold a Branch Is Growing

melody Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

**1. Behold a branch is growing
As of loveliest form and grace,
As prophets sung, foreknowing;
It springs from Jesse's race
And bears one little Flower
In midst of coldest winter,
At deepest midnight hour.**

**2. Isaiah hath foretold It
words of promise sure,
And Mary's arms enfold It,
A virgin meek and pure.
Through God's eternal will
This Child to her is given
At midnight calm and still**

**4. This flower whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The Darkness everywhere.
True Man, yet very God;
From sin and death He saves us
And lightens every load.**

**5. O Savior, Child of Mary,
Who felt our human woe;
Savior, King of Glory.
Who dost our weakness know,
Bring us at length, we pray.
To the bright courts of heaven
And to the endless day.**

P Blessed be the Name of the Father, and of (+) the Son, and of the Holy Spirit
now and forever.

C Amen.

Advent Confession

P The Lord of Advent tells us to be watchful for His coming, keeping our lamps lighted, and our hearts clean.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P Let us confess to the Lord. *(silence)* God and Father of all:

C We prepare our hearts for the coming of Your Son, confessing our sins of omission and commission, confessing our lure into a godless world that knows not the Christ of our preparations. Forgive our sins, cleanse our hearts, and keep us faithful and focused on the promised coming of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

P God sent His Son, the Babe of Bethlehem, to show His infinite love and forgiveness for all. Your sins are forgiven in the Holy Name of + Christ, Who came and will come again.

C Amen.

Advent Hymn *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* # 341

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray. Thank You, loving Heavenly Father, for coming with power to the Virgin Mary and making her the mother of our Lord. Come to us with Your Holy Spirit, so that we may receive Your Saving Word and rejoice in our Savior. For He lives with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Announcements

First Reading *Micah 5:2-5* Pew Bible, p. 694

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P The fourth candle on our Advent wreath commemorates St. Joseph. Joseph is a model of faithfulness. Silently standing in the shadow, he carried out his calling to provide for Mary and the Christ child, Jesus. Joseph reminds all of us, especially Christian men, of the calling to be faithful to our families as well as modeling a life of faith, commitment and service.

(Lighting of the Advent wreath)

P Let us pray: Lord God, heavenly Father, You entrusted the Lord Jesus Christ to the care of Joseph and Mary. In Joseph we see a model of faithfulness as he faithfully worked to provide for his family. We pray that we may follow his example of serving You with our hearts, hands and mind. Help us realize that our labors are not in vain when they are done for Your glory. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* # 357 v. 4

**O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry over the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.!**

Second Lesson *Hebrews 10:5-10* Pew Bible, p. 893

After the reading:

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Alleluia Verse

P Alleluia, alleluia. "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a ruler who will shepherd My people Israel (Matt 2:6 NKJV)." Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

Pew Bible, p. 717

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord. (*spoken*)

After the reading:

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ. Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for coming as the Promised Messiah. Help us to receive You in joyful faith. (*spoken*)

The Nicene Creed (*on back of hymnal*)

Message

Hymn of the Day

Once He Came in Blessing

333

Gathering of the Offerings

Prayer of the Church

P Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. Let us bring before God the needs of the world. Wonderful counselor, give Your wisdom to the rulers of the nations. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Mighty God, make the whole world know that the government is on Your shoulders. Lord, in Your mercy

C hear our prayer.

P Everlasting Father, establish Your reign of justice and righteousness for ever. Lord, in Your mercy

C hear our prayer.

P Prince of peace, bring in the endless kingdom of Your peace. Lord, in Your mercy

C hear our prayer.

Special Prayers for:

- Gwen Bernhardt - Kimberly Hicks, (great granddaughter of Frances Jordan, health issues) -Robin Beam, (sister of Susan Lucero) - Michelle Burrus (at home) - Hank Gramlich (father of Cindy Clem, health issues) – Theresa Wilcox - Marjorie Harcourt, (aunt of Jim Ittenbach, Multiple Myeloma.) - Lucille Keys .
- Please remember the family of our sainted sister, Gwen Bernhard who died on Wednesday, December 18.
- Birthdays: **Silva Emmanuel** (12/24); **Pat Fitzenreiter** (12/26); **Paul Commins** (12/29); **Sharon Townsend** (12/29).

P Almighty Lord, hear our prayer and fulfill Your purposes in us, as You accomplished Your will in our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Communion Liturgy

P The virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,

C and they shall name Him Emmanuel, which means, “God is with us” (Matt. 1:23).

P Restore us, O God of hosts;

C let Your face shine, that we may be saved (Psalm 80:7).

P It is indeed right and good, Lord God, Holy Father, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, through Jesus Christ our Lord. You fulfilled Your promise to comfort Your people by sending Jesus the Redeemer, and to make all things new through Him when He comes to judge the world and set it right.

C And so, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we adore and praise Your Glorious Name. Amen.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Communion Invitation

P Blessed are those who have been invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.

C Thanks be to God.

P Come, everything is ready.

Distribution of Holy Communion

Prayer after Communion

C Thank You, Heavenly Father, for coming to earth and taking on our human nature. Be with us through the healing gift of this Sacrament, so that we receive Your Saving Word and rejoice in our Savior. For He lives with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

P As we celebrate this week the birth of Jesus our Savior, continue to live lives of hope, peace, joy, and love. Share God's love with the shepherds you meet on the hillside. Let the fellowship of the Holy Spirit fill your heart with glad tidings like the angels. And may the Prince of Peace live in your heart comfort and challenge you as you seek to live as one of His disciples.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

✠ Please turn and face the Processional Cross as it is carried out. ✠

Closing Hymn *On Christmas Night All Christians Sing* # 377

Dismissal

P Maranatha! "Come, Lord! And do not delay!"

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. (*Revelation 22:20*)

Postlude

Come quickly, Lord, come quickly!

Altar Flowers & Eternal Light

The Altar Flowers are given this day to the glory of God by Karen Curry in memory of loved ones.

The Eternal Light is given in honor of **Silva Emmanuel's** birthday.

2019 Calendar!

The 2019 Altar Flowers and Eternal Light sign up chart is now posted in the narthex between the restrooms.

Serving with Gladness

Celebrant: Rev. Dr. Stephen H. Mentz, *Pastor*

Assisting: Rev. Suah S. Deddeh, *Assistant Pastor of Welcoming & Outreach*

Organist: Roberto Vela, Esq. **Greeter:** Ann Burt

Altar Guild: TBA **Lector:** Jim Ittenbach **Counters:** Bob & Priscilla Krueger

Communion Assistant: Mindy Ittenbach

Ushers: Warren Winker & Keroub Emmanuel

Church Offering Envelopes

2019 church offering envelopes are in your mailboxes. For those who do not yet have a mail box they are on the table by the mailboxes. If you would like envelopes, please sign the form on the table. Thank you!

Lectionary Readings for December 30st (Christmas 1)

Exodus 13:1-3; 11-15 Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:22-40

Thank You!

Pastor Deddeh and I want to thank all of you who worked at the Community Outreach Program yesterday at Holy Cross Church.

Thrift Store

Our Christmas Thrift Store market was the best ever! A very special thanks is in order for all who worked in the store! The Thrift Store is now closed until January 10!

Heat is Back On!

We finally have heat in the Thrift Store and in the Parlor! We thank you for your patience and understanding.

Overcoming Fear and Anxiety Through Spiritual Growth!

Our next class will be on Thursday, January 3 at 7:00 p.m.



Holy Cross Lutheran Church Holiday Schedule

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24 6:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Service of Holy Communion

December 25 9:30 a.m.

New Year's Eve Service of Holy Communion 5:00 p.m.

New Year's Eve Watch Night Service

9:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.

Watch Night Meal 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.



We are making plans for a new service, a Watch Night Service for New Year's Eve!

The service will consist of singing and praying as we welcome in the new year! A pot-luck meal will

be offered from 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The service is from 9:00 p.m. – 12:01 A.m.