

ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Mid-Week On-Line Advent Prayer Service 2022

Season of Generosity

GATHERING

We suggest you find a place to be comfortable, free of distractions; a place of calm and reflective nature to engage in this time. You may wish to light your own Advent candle as we begin this service.

Remember, wherever two or more are gathered, even in your living room and across the internet, God has promised to be present. May you feel a sense of community as we come together in our various locations.

Prelude

Advent Invocation – A Prayer for Generosity

Gracious God, because we are made in your image, we are made to reflect your giving and generous nature. Therefore, we ask that you mold us to reflect this image. Shape our hearts, minds, and souls that we might learn to give as freely as you give. For you are a God who holds nothing back but lays down even your own life for us.

Amen.

The Advent Wreath

November 27, 2022

First Week of Advent

As we light the first candle, turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance, bring justice to the poor, transform our hearts to live in and harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.

December 4, 2022

Second Week of Advent

As we light these candles wake us from our sleep, wrap us in your light, empower us to live honorably, and guide us along your path and teach us your way of giving and peace.

Let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord. Amen.

December 11, 2022

Third Week of Advent

As we light these candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience and joy until the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.

December 18, 2021

Fourth Week of Advent

As we light these candles, turn again to us in mercy; strengthen our faith to help those in need and in your word. Restore us and give us life that we may be saved.

Let us rejoice in love, for the Son of God, Emmanuel, comes to be with us. Amen.

Advent Response: We Are Awaiting the Coming of Jesus

We are a - wait - ing the com - ing of Je - sus, yearn - ing in
dark - ness for light and for peace, long - ing at last to re -
joice on that day when all peo - ple join in this feast. _____

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WORD

1 Scripture & Meditation: Generous God

Pastor Karen

A reading from Matthew 26:6-13

Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, 'Why this waste? For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor.'

But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, 'Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.'

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

2 Scripture & Meditation: Generous People - Part 1

Cherney Family

A reading from John 6:5-14

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages[a] to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down."

There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

3 Scripture & Meditation: Generous People - Part 2

Pastor Ann

A reading from Luke 21:1-4

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

4 Scripture & Meditation: Generous Gifts

Richter Family

A reading from Luke 5:17-20, 24-26 (NIV)

One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven - get up, take your mat and go home." Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Advent Waiting

Advent is a time of waiting. Let us reflect and notice the generous gift of time that presents itself in our day. A time to reflect, meditate, and pray.

[Insert Waiting Videos]

Prayers

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to acknowledge you as the giver of all good gifts.

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to share without expecting something in return.

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to be wise in the way of caring for ourselves and others.

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to hold our treasures and values with open hands.

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to recognize the abundance of blessings in each passing day.

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to know the freedom that comes with generosity.

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to accept our talents and to use them in service.

Gracious God, give us generous hearts.

...to grow in giving thanks for everything.

Gracious God, who so generously lavishes our lives with goodness, create in our hearts a deep center of gratitude. Remind us often of how much you cherish us, of how abundantly you have offered gifts to us, especially in the hours of our greatest need. May we always be grateful for your reaching into our lives with surprises of hope, peace, joy, and love.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come, your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

Almighty God, whose generous love transforms all people, create in us a heart to seek your will, so that we may give of ourselves in response to your call. May the peace of God accompany our Advent waiting, the light of Christ warm our hearts, and the joy of the Spirit be with us this day and always.

Amen.

Postlude