

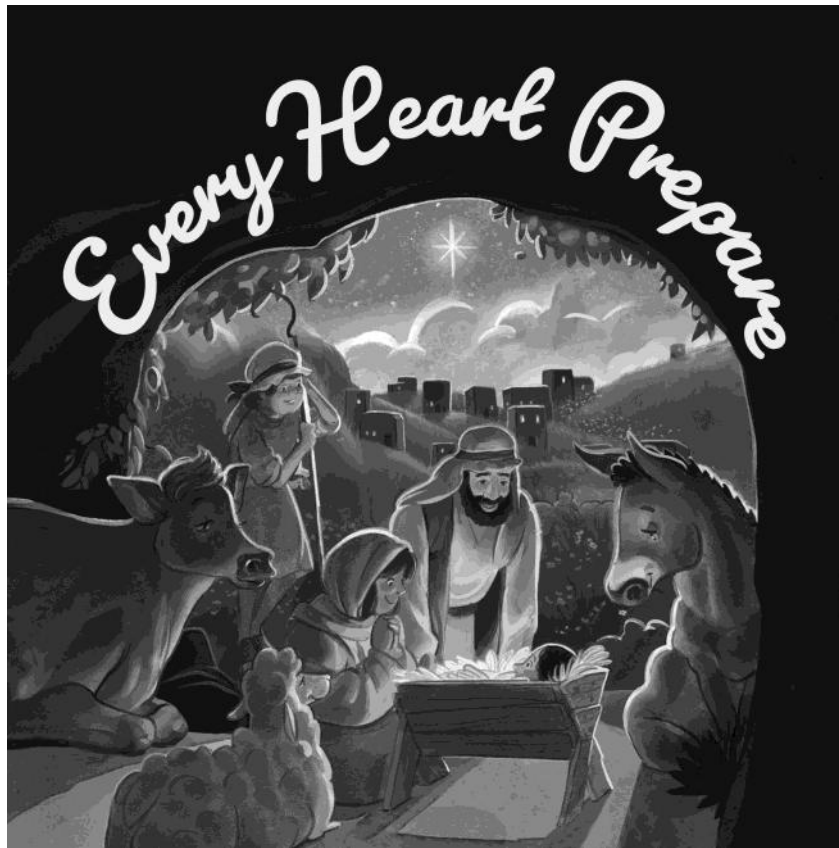
Concordia Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod

Beulah, North Dakota

December 3, 2025

Wednesday in Advent 1



*Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*

Psalm 24:7

VESPERS

EVERGREENS

“Prepare!” is often the watchword of the season as the world gets ready for another celebration of Christmas. A basic 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 -- something 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 us.

Tonight, we focus on evergreens. Perhaps the most simple of decorations in the eyes of the world, but for us, 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.

Opening Sentences

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.

Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
make haste to help me, O Lord.

**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.
Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us.**

Psalm 92 (antiphon: v.12)

The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
to declare Your steadfast love in the morning,
and Your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.

For You, O LORD, have made me glad by Your work;
at the works of Your hands I sing for joy.

How great are Your works, O LORD!
Your thoughts are very deep!

The stupid man cannot know; the fool cannot understand this:
**that though the wicked sprout like grass and all evildoers flourish,
they are doomed to destruction forever;**
but You, O LORD,
are on high forever.

For behold, Your enemies, O LORD, for behold, Your enemies shall perish;
all evildoers shall be scattered.

But You have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
You have poured over me fresh oil.

My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;
my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants.

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.
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.
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.
The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Hymn # 350 "Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come"

Readings

Hosea 14:4-8	<i>After each reading,</i>
Revelation 22:1-5	O Lord, have mercy on us.
John 11:17-27	Thanks be to God.

Responsory for Advent

Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.

This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.

This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

Sermon: Evergreens

Canticle Hymn # 933 "My Soul Rejoices"

Offering

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy;
Christ have mercy;
Lord, have mercy.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Collects

O Lord, hear my prayer.
And let my cry come to You.

For eyes to behold the Father's hand in all creation, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

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:

Lord, have mercy.

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:

Lord, have mercy.

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:

Lord, have mercy.

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:

Lord, have mercy.

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:

Lord, have mercy.

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:

Lord, have mercy.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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.

Amen.

Additional Collets of intercession and thanksgiving

Lord of life, You sent Your Son to bring back to life all the children of Adam. Grant that we may view the evergreens of this season through the eyes of faith 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; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Benediction

The grace of our Lord (†) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.

Hymn # 357 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (st. 1, 4)