

Prairieland Parish

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.
May we together experience the presence of God

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Advent

Prelude

Welcome

Announcements

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy

Today, we come face to face with the scandal of Advent: Mary, the unmarried mother; God Incarnate growing in Mary’s womb as a vulnerable baby; and God’s love at work in ways that society and propriety could not understand.

All that had been prophesied by Isaiah in 7:14 who said...
God wants us to know, even when we aren’t sure ourselves. God wants us to experience God’s presence, even when we think we can handle life on our own. God sends us signs of God’s presence with us; all we need to do is keep our eyes open and look.

Light all four candles of the Advent wreath

We light these candles, the candle of joyous hope, of proclaimed peace, of deep everlasting joy, and today of presence that speaks of love, as a sign that no matter our circumstance, we know we are not alone.

Advent Hymn

Opening Prayer

Gracious Father, You promised this day through the prophets. Grant us grace by Your Spirit to receive the Savior as Your Son in flesh, to rejoice that You have kept Your promise and delivered to us a Savior from sin and death, and to remember this love in all the days to come; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

We Hear God’s Word

Gospel Reading..... Luke 2:1–20

New Revised Standard Version

The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.[a]

The Shepherds and the Angels

8 Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,[b] the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,[c] praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"[d]

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, 19 and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

Children's Sermon

FAITH HYMN UMH

"Message"

Joys/Concerns

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

In the hushed anticipation of your coming, O Lord, remind us that you are always with us, that like Joseph we might always be eager to fulfill your will, and be eager to pray:

O God, in days to come the mountain of your house will be established, and your joy shall reign. We pray for the church (especially...), that you might teach us your ways and that we might walk in your paths.

Out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and you, O God, shall judge between the nations. We pray for our nation, and all nations, that your peace would be manifest in every corner of the earth.

In your Kingdom, O Lord, wolves lie down with lambs and children play with serpents without fear. We pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in distress of any kind (especially...); that you would heal all injuries, comfort all grief, and settle all wrongs. In your Kingdom, O Lord, even the wilderness and dry land are glad and rejoice. We pray for those who rejoice this week as they celebrate their birthday (especially... and anniversaries...); that they might obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing might flee away.

In the fulness of time, O God, you sent your son, to be born of our sister Mary. And his name was Emmanuel: God With Us. We thank you for your Presence with us, and we pray that you might be always present with those whom we love but see no longer.

O Christ, hear our prayers, restore us, and show us the glorious light of your countenance, that we might be saved in the name of the one who came to this earth to walk amongst us we pray, Our Father...

Offertory Doxology

Offertory Prayer

Holy God of hope and promise: As we bring you our offerings this day, so many of us are discouraged, trying to find our way. We need your sign, we need your Son, not as simply a reminder of history but as a new direction. Guide us by your signs on this day and as we begin the journey to Bethlehem once again. In the Savior's name, we pray. Amen. (Isaiah 7:10-16)

***Departing Hymn**

Benediction

God still sends signs. Open your eyes to the possibility of grace.
God still sends signs. Embrace the child of hope.
God still sends signs. Let the song of joy send you forth in peace.
Go with the God who still sends signs.

***POSTLUDE**