

Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Fourth Sunday in Advent

Rorate Coeli

23 December Anno ✝ Domini 2007

Welcome

Welcome to the Lord's House this morning for Divine Service. Rejoice, for the Lord comes to you here in this place to give you His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation through His precious means of grace – His Holy Word and Sacraments. We pray the Lord's richest blessings upon you as you receive these Divine gifts. Please take the time to fill out the **Record of Fellowship form** that is in the pew. If you are visiting with us this morning, we want you to know that we are overjoyed that you are here. Please make your visit known to us by introducing yourself to us after the Service and by signing the guest book that is in the hallway on the left as you leave the sanctuary. The Lord be with us in Divine Service this morning!

Holy Communion Practice

- The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine, but His very Body and Blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. In preparation for receiving this blessed Sacrament, you may refer to Martin Luther's "Christian Questions with Their Answers" found on pages 329-330 in *LSB*.
- Communicants at this altar are to be in full confessional fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the LCMS are asked, out of love and Christian responsibility, to refrain from partaking with us this morning. If you have any questions regarding Holy Communion, you are invited and encouraged to speak with the pastor before or after the Service.
- See Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to welcome all people into the fellowship of God's love by proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and to nurture our members with God's Holy Word and Sacraments.



"And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!'" (Luke 1:41-42)

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LSB DIVINE SERVICE 3, PAGE 184

The Service of Preparation

(Upon entering the nave, silence should be observed to allow all the opportunity to prayerfully prepare for the presence of the Lord and the reception of His gifts)

The Prelude and Ringing of the Bells

The Lighting of the Fourth Candle

P The fourth candle of the Advent Wreath we light this morning is the candle of love, “for God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). As we conclude this Advent Season and move into the Christmas season, know and believe, with St. Paul, that “nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:39).

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus, Come. Amen.

The Opening Hymn: 855 “For All the Faithful Women” (stzs. 1, 8, 3, 4)

The Confession and Absolution (pp. 184-185)

From Martin Luther’s Commentary on The Magnificat

From this we may learn how to show [Mary] the honor and devotion that are her due. How ought one to address her? Keep these words in mind, and they will teach you to say: “O Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, you were nothing and all despised; yet God in His grace regarded you and worked such great things in you. You were worthy of none of them, but the rich and abundant grace of God was upon you, far above any merit of yours. Hail to you! Blessed are you, from thenceforth and forever, in finding such a God.” Nor need you fear that she will take it amiss if we call her unworthy of such grace. For, of a truth, she did not lie when she herself acknowledged her unworthiness and nothingness, which God regarded, not because of any merit in her, but solely by reason of His grace.

But she does take it amiss that the vain chatteringers preach and write so many things about her merits. They are set on proving their own skill and fail to see how they spoil the Magnificat, make the Mother of God a liar, and diminish the grace of God. For, in proportion as we ascribe merit and worthiness to her, we lower the grace of God and diminish the truth of the Magnificat. The angel salutes her only as highly favored of God, and because the Lord is with her (Luke 1:28), which is why she is blessed among women. Hence all those who heap such great praise and honor upon her head are not far from making an idol of her, as though she were concerned that men should honor her and look to her for good things, when in truth she thrusts this from her and would have us honor God in her and come through her to a good confidence in His grace.

Whoever, therefore, would show her the proper honor must not regard her alone and by herself, but set her in the presence of God and far beneath Him, must there strip her of all honor, and regard her low estate, as she says; he should then marvel at the exceedingly abundant grace of God, who regards, embraces, and blesses so poor and despised a mortal. Thus regarding her, you will be moved to love and praise God for His grace, and drawn to look for all good things to Him, who does not reject but graciously regards poor and despised and lowly mortals. Thus your heart will be strengthened in faith and love and hope. What do you suppose would please her more than to have you come through her to God this way, and learn from her to put your hope and trust in Him, notwithstanding your despised and lowly estate, in life as well as in death? She does not want you to come to her, but through her to God . . .

[She is the] highest woman and the noblest gem in Christianity after Christ. She is nobility, wisdom, and holiness personified. We can never honor her enough. Still honor and praise must be given to her in such a way as to injure neither Christ nor the Scriptures.

The Meaning of Rorate Coeli

The fourth Sunday in Advent is traditionally known as Rorate Coeli, which are the first Latin words of the Historic Introit assigned to this Sunday. Rorate Coeli means “Drop down dew, O heavens” (Rorate, coeli, desuper, et nubes pluant iustum = Drop down dew [i.e., Shower], O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness).

The Service of the Sacrament

(Please read the statement regarding Holy Communion on the back of the bulletin)

The Preface and Proper Preface (p. 194)

The Sanctus (p. 195)

The Lord's Prayer (p. 196) - *prayed by all; conclusion sung by all*

The Words of Our Lord (p. 197) - *chanted by pastor to alternative tune*

The Pax Domini (p. 197)

The Agnus Dei (p. 198)

Communicants are invited to pray the following:

Before receiving the Sacrament:

Dear Savior, at Your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul and to the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Thanksgiving after receiving the Sacrament:

Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the holy Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

Distribution Hymns

602 "The Gifts Christ Freely Gives"

818 "In Thee Is Gladness"

346 "When All the World Was Cursed"

933 "My Soul Rejoices"

352 "Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord"

The Nunc Dimittis (pp. 199-200)

The Thanksgiving and Post-Communion Collect (pp. 200-201)

The Salutation and Benedicamus (pp. 201-202)

The Benediction (p. 202)

The Closing Hymn: 353 "Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring"

The Postlude

Soli Deo Gloria!

The Service of the Word

The Introit

Ps. 19:1, 4-6; antiphon: Is. 45:8a



Shower, O heavens, | from above,*

and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;

let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear fruit;*

let the earth cause them | both to sprout.

The heavens declare the glo- | ry of God,*

and the sky above proclaims his | handiwork.

Their measuring line goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end | of the world.*

In them he has set a tent | for the sun,

which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his | chamber,*

and, like a strong man, runs its | course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the | end of them,*

and there is nothing hidden | from its heat.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*

is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Shower, O heavens, | from above,*

and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;

let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear fruit;*

let the earth cause them | both to sprout.

The Kyrie (p. 186)

The Gloria in Excelsis is omitted during Advent

The Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 189)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The Old Testament Reading

Deuteronomy 18:15-19

¹⁵“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—¹⁶just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’¹⁷And the Lord said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet

like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.”

The Gradual

Ps. 145:18, 21

The Lord is near to all who | call on him,*
to all who call on | him in truth.

**My mouth will speak the praise | of the Lord,*
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and | ever.**

The Epistle

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Alleluia and Verse



☐ Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.



☐ **You are my help and my de- | liverer;***
do not delay, | O my God!



☐ Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel

Luke 1:39-56

³⁹In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For

behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

⁴⁶And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; ⁵²he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

⁵⁶And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

The Nicene Creed (p. 191)

The Hymn of the Day: 356 “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

The Sermon: “Most Highly Favored Lady” (Luke 1:39-56)

The Offertory (pp. 192-193)

The Offering is gathered for the Lord’s work (p. 193)

Choir: “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand; pondering nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand, Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand. King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood, Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood; he will give to all the faithful his own self for heav’nly food. Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way, as the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day, that the powers of hell may vanquish as the darkness clears away. Alleluia! At his feet the six winged seraph, cherubim, with sleepless eye, veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord Most High! Alleluia!

The Prayer of the Church (p. 193)

☐ . . . let us pray to the Lord.

☐ **Lord, have mercy.**