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Johnstown, PA 15905  
(814) 255-1395



Moxham Lutheran Church  
500 Park Avenue  
Johnstown, PA 15902  
(814) 539-8664

## Second Sunday of Advent

Christ Lutheran 9:00 a.m. ✚ Moxham Lutheran 10:30 a.m.

December 7, 2025

The wilderness in which John the Baptist lived is key to understanding Israelite history. The wilderness is more than a geographical place – it is THE PLACE where God meets, reveals to, tests, and saves God’s very own people. Salvation always seems to come from the wilderness. Moses, Elijah, and David all had to flee to the wilderness. Likewise, Jesus will emerge from the wilderness to begin his ministry and preach good news to a disconsolate and demoralized people. He will return there several times during his ministry.

It was in the wilderness that God tested the people of the Old Covenant, and it was there that they rebelled. It was in the wilderness that God saved them again and again, and the wilderness was the crucible out of which they were molded into a nation. The wilderness was both a route to the Promised Land and a place of spiritual formation. It was a place where people sinned, repented, and had their relationship with God restored.

Could it be? Could it be that it is in the wilderness of our lives that we meet our Savior and our God? Could it be that in that wilderness our paths, too, will be made straight? Could our sojourn together as a “parish” also be a time in which the mission and ministry of this congregation is likewise being reshaped and reformed?

### Gathering

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### Welcome

### Prelude

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ One God,  
who comes to wake us from sleep,  
who leads us into the light of grace.

Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine upon us, that we may know your salvation.

*We pause for silent reflection*

Our indifference toward your coming,  
**we confess to you, Lord.**

Our desire to control – even time and seasons,  
**we confess to you, Lord.**

Our failure to be alert to the signs of your presence in our midst,  
**we confess to you, Lord.**

Our lack of concern for those who come after us,  
**we confess to you, Lord.**

Our injustices toward all the people you came to serve and save,  
**we confess to you, Lord.**

Isaiah has written: “Comfort, O Comfort my people, says your God,  
speak tenderly to her and declare that her penalty is paid.”

In Jesus Christ ✙ your sins are forgiven, and all things are made new.  
Rejoice in this good news!

**Amen.**

**Gathering Song:** “Hark the Glad Sound”

**No. 239**

### **Advent Greeting**

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

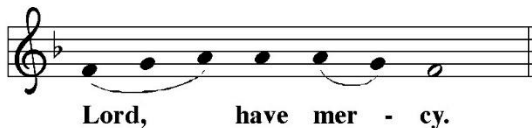
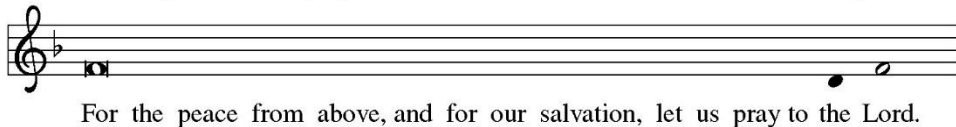
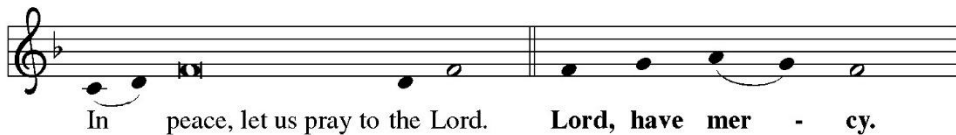
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,  
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

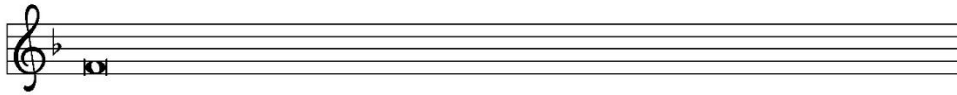
*Today's First Reading*

From the One who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty:  
grace, light, and peace be with you all.

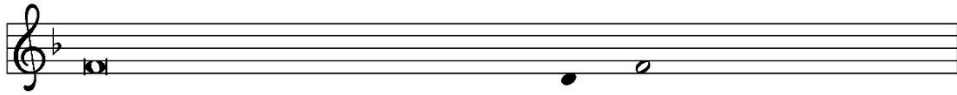
**And also with you.**

### **Kyrie**





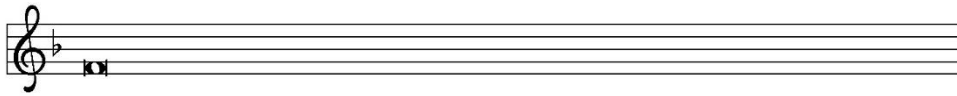
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



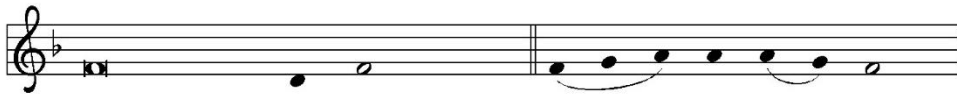
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

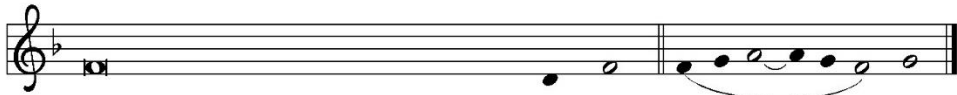


For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

## Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection, save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## Word

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## Blessing of the Advent Wreath

Today is the second Sunday of Advent -  
a time to prepare again for the coming of Jesus.  
We light a candle to remind us that  
Jesus brings light into the dark wilderness places of the world.

**Through the prophet Malachi, God promises a messenger who will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord. John the Baptist was that messenger who prepared Jesus' way. Now we wait in faith for Christ's coming again.**

We light the second candle to remind us that all of God's promises were fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ – The Prince of Peace.

*After the second candle is lit we sing vs. 2 of No. 240 as follows*

**Light two candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,  
gently lead them homeward.**

**First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10**

- <sup>1</sup> A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- <sup>2</sup> The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
- <sup>3</sup> His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see  
or decide by what his ears hear,
- <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor  
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- <sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
- <sup>6</sup> The wolf shall live with the lamb;  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;  
the calf and the lion will feed together,  
and a little child shall lead them.
- <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze;  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- <sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

<sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.

<sup>10</sup> On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19**

<sup>1</sup> Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to the king's son;

<sup>2</sup> **that he may rule your people righteously  
and the poor with justice;**

<sup>3</sup> that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,  
and the hills, in righteousness.

<sup>4</sup> **Let him defend the needy among the people,  
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

<sup>5</sup> May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,  
from one generation to another.

<sup>6</sup> **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,  
like showers that water the earth.**

<sup>7</sup> In his time may the righteous flourish;  
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

<sup>18</sup> **Blessed are you, Lord God, the God of Israel;  
you alone do wondrous deeds!**

<sup>19</sup> And blessed be your glorious name forever,  
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. **Amen. Amen.**

### **Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13**

<sup>4</sup> Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup> Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors <sup>9</sup> and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name”;

<sup>10</sup> and again he says, “Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;

<sup>11</sup> and again, “Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him”;

<sup>12</sup> and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles;

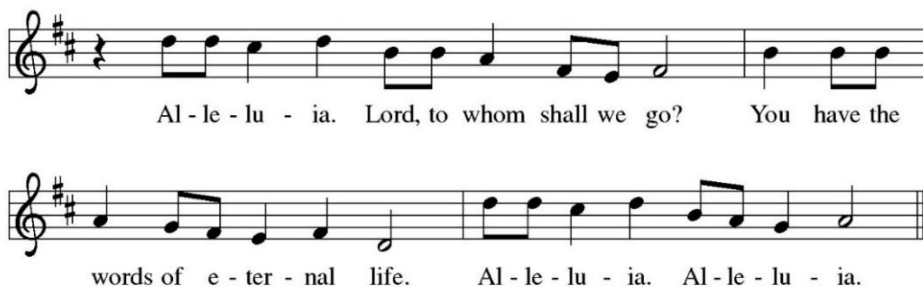
in him the gentiles shall hope.”

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Acclamation



## Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’ ”

<sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day:** “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist Cried”

**No. 249**

## **Nicene Creed**

Remembering that God’s promises have been fulfilled in Jesus, we confess the faith into which we were baptized.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven;  
Was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake, he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day, he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**



**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting in your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*A brief silence.*

God of the people, we come seeking wisdom and instruction. Uphold and strengthen lay leaders, teachers, pastors, and bishops. Teach us your ways and lead us in your paths. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of the earth, we seek your goodness in the grandeur of creation. Empower us to care for forests and oceans, as we see you in the world around us. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, grant wisdom to elected leaders, judges, and mediators seeking peace. Cast out words of hate and transform them into words for the building up of our communities. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of the poor, set tables of abundance in all places where hands are empty, where stomachs ache with hunger, and where hearts and minds suffer pain. Feed and heal all who are in need. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of new possibilities, when addiction wounds, jealousy tears down, and relationships fray, show us how to journey with one another. Nurture therapists, counselors, and sponsors in their care for others. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of all time, build up our lives that we would reflect your grace. And then, at the last, bring us with all the saints to your holy city where peace and goodness make a home. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

**Amen.**

## Peace

## Meal

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

### Presentation of Gifts

No. 487



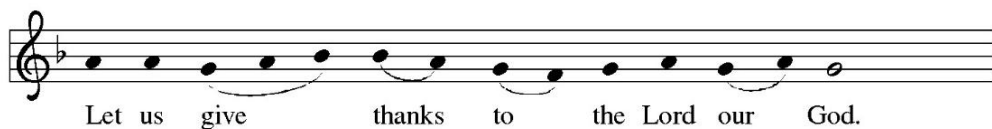
- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



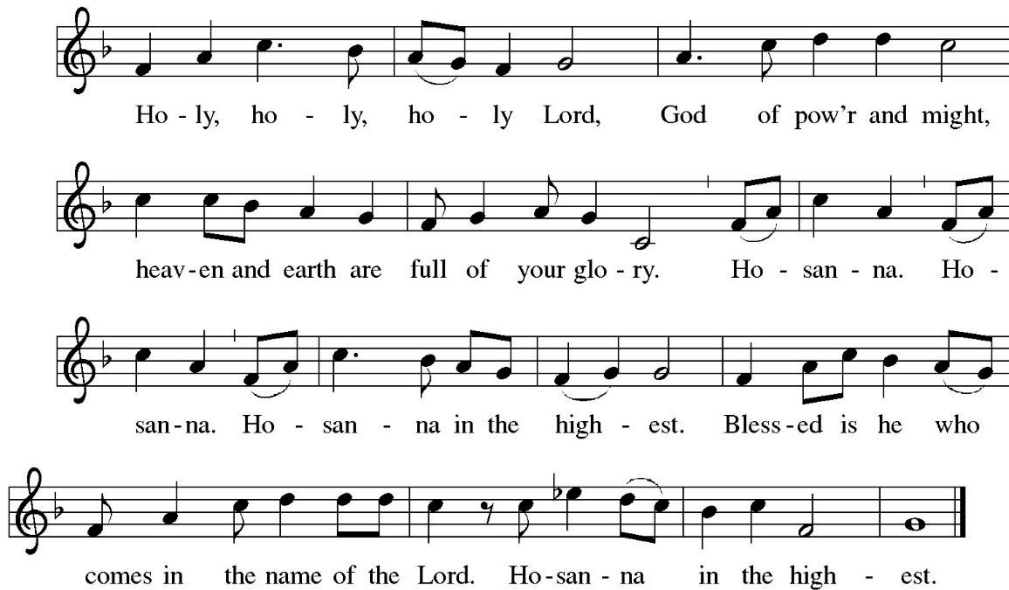
he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have light;  
he came down that we may have peace; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.  
he came down that we may have joy;

## Offering Prayer

### The Great Thanksgiving



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

## Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy Father,  
You are the beginning and the end, the giver of all life:  
It is You who gave birth to creation,  
You, from whom all light has shone,  
You, who is faithful to your promises,  
You, who opened Mary to your will.  
You, from whom your Son proceeds,  
Your Word made flesh.

### *Words of Institution*

With this bread and cup, we remember your Word made flesh,  
dwelling among us, full of grace and truth  
we remember our new birth in his death and resurrection,  
we remember to look with hope for his coming.  
May your Word now take flesh in us, filling us with your light,  
and bringing to us the gift of peace. **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray . . .

## Invitation to Communion

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

## Lamb of God



## Prayer after Communion

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.

Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger,  
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

## Sending

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## Blessing

May God who comes among us, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,  
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,  
and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

## Sending Hymn: "Prepare the Royal Highway"

**No. 264**

## Dismissal

Go in peace. Keep awake.

**Thanks be to God.**