

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church  
229 South Broad Street  
Jersey Shore, PA 17740  
570-398-1676

Sunday, December 19, 2021

4th Sunday of Advent

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY**

*Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."*

### **SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS**

#### **PRELUDE**

#### **CHRISTAS AT SKOKIE JUNCTION** (a play by Gary Johnson)

*Mary, Did You Know?* Gracie Welshans and Gary Johnson

#### **LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

P: Holy are you, God of steadfast love and faithfulness;  
you promised to make a covenant with your chosen ones,  
to establish the throne of your servant David forever.  
As we light these candles, open our hearts to the mystery of the incarnation  
revealed to your servant Mary and plant your word in us that it may grow and prosper.  
Show us your favor, O Rock of our salvation.  
Reveal your love to us, and strength us for service in your name.

**C: Amen**

#### **Light One candle to Watch for Messiah 240 (verse 4)**

*Light four candles to watch for Messiah:*

*Let the light banish darkness.*

*He is coming, tell the glad tidings.*

*Let your lights be shining!*

#### **Litany for Advent:**

P; The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and bring your light to dwell among us.**

P: For unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and make us run to you with the eagerness of children.**

P: A voice cries in the wilderness, prepare you the way of the Lord.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and grant us the courage to raise our voices for those who are voiceless.**

P: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord so that we may shine the light of your glory to all we encounter.**

P: Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning?

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and open our ears to the cries of the poor and oppressed among us.**

P: They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and grant us strength and endurance for the race we must run.**

P: Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the ends of the Earth.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and open our hearts to sing your praise in all that we say and do.**

P: And He will come to Zion as redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and turn us from transgression to redemption. Arise, shine, for your light has come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.**

P: Stir up your power, O Lord, that we may live as light in the darkness.

**C: The Spirit of the Lord, God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.**

P: Stir up your power, O Lord that we may feel your spirit resting upon us; and grant us a heart for the poor.

**C: For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth.**

P: Stir up your power, O Lord, that we may help bring about a new earth in your name.

**C: Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Come, Lord Jesus! Amen**

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

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who alone does wonders,  
who lifts up the lowly,  
who fills the hungry with good things  
**Amen**

P. Let us confess our sins trusting in the tender mercy of our God  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**God for whom we wait,  
In the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you.  
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.  
We falter in our call to tend your creation.  
We find our sense of self in material wealth.  
We fear those different from ourselves.**