

Joseph Said Yes
December 21st – Advent 4

WELCOME

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Long-expected God,

we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake for your kingdom to come. Free us from reluctance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. In Jesus Christ, God has said "Yes" to us. In Jesus Christ ☩ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn "O Little Town of Bethlehem" **ELW #279**

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE LITANY

We light four candles for the four corners of the earth:

Everything to the north, and the south,

Everything to the east, and the west.

We light four candles to say YES to the invitation to care for the earth and for all her good creation.

CANDLELIGHTING SONG (tune of Jesus Loves Me #595)

Jesus loves me! This I now, for the Bible tells me so;

We light candles on this day. God be with us, "yes" we pray.

Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me.

Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you **And also with you.**

Lord God, **Like Joseph, give us tender and open hearts, ready to do your will. Help us to see where our hopes and dreams fit with your plans for our lives, Amen.**

Children's Time

FIRST READING Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." ¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

L) The Word of the Lord **C) Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, ⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

L) The Word of the Lord **C) Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (refrain of Jesus Loves Me)

Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me.

Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

L) The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 1st Chapter.

C) Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

L) The Gospel of the Lord **C) Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

ELW #282

APOSTLE'S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.*

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

PRAYERS

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

L) In the anticipation of these days, prepare our hearts for your arrival. Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

L) The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

L) You send your saving grace and peace to the nations. Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good. May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

L) When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill (*especially*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

L) Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support. Bless young children and new parents. Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

L) We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service. Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your love. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

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

PEACE

L) The peace of Christ be with you always. **C) And also with you.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"In the Bleak Midwinter" #294 verse 3

OFFERING PRAYER

L) Let us pray.... God of every good gift, **We offer what we have back to you, knowing that your son is the greatest gift we will ever receive. Grant us glad and generous hearts, ever and always, Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

L) The Lord be with you.

C) And also with you.

L) Lift up your hearts.

C) We lift them to the Lord.

L) Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C) It is right to give our thanks and praise.

L) It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY ELW 207

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heav'n and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest,

hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

COMMUNION SONG

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION (ALL ARE WELCOME)

L) The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

C) Thanks be to God.

**** Bread is Gluten Free. A Non Alcoholic option is in the center of the trays.**

COMMUNION

L) The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **C) Amen.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

L) Let us pray.... Christ Jesus, **You have fed us with love incarnate, and we are utterly changed. Send us forth from this meal to be forces for change in this world, as we find the YES within each of us, Amen.**

BLESSING

May God bless you with courage, as you seek the YES within you;
May Christ be born again in every risk you take for the sake of the world;
And may the Holy Spirit remind you, again and again, that you are never alone, and that you are loved beyond measure. Amen.

SENDING HYMN

The Bells of Christmas

ELW #298

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.