



**DECEMBER 11, 2022**  
**ADVENT 3 – *We Can Choose a Better Way***  
**FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION**

*Ring of Bell*

PRELUDE

CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

L: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked the question, "What brings you joy?" From the voices of different generations, hear their answers... (*dialogue*)

ADVENT THREE CANDLES ARE LIT

**HYMN:** *Prepare the Royal Highway*

**ELW 264** vs.1,2,4

- 1 Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near!  
Let ev'ry hill and valley a level road appear!  
Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!**
- 2 God's people, see him coming: your own eternal king!  
Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!  
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you!  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!**
- 4 His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heav'n above.  
His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love.  
So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!**

CALL TO CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: It is said it only takes a tenth of a second for us to look at someone's face and determine a stereotype about who they are. With decisions happening that quickly, it is not hard to imagine why we might need this moment of confession.

The prayer of confession is an opportunity to slow down. We take that tenth of a second and give it room to breathe. We reflect on the decisions that we've made this past week and we ask for God's mercy to be in all of them. (pause)

And without fail, God wiggles into the cracks of our lives, and we are made better for it. So with that confidence, let us go to God in prayer.

P: God of mercy,

**All: a million times a day we have the opportunity to be gracious, to assume the best in others, to give the benefit of the doubt. A million times a day we could choose the better way, but so often we don't. Fear and greed kick in. Assumptions and insecurities take the wheel. Comparison and critique lead the charge. Forgive us for forgetting that we are descendants of Joseph. Forgive us for forgetting that grace and mercy are in our blood. Forgive us for forgetting that all belong to you. Give us the courage to love even bigger than before, and wisdom to choose a better way.**

P: Family of Faith, hear this good news: We who have chosen wrong, are given a second chance. We who have lost our way, are welcomed into community. We who feel alone, are seen, held, and known. This is the good news of the gospel. No matter how many times we choose wrong or lose our way, God continues to be a God of second chances, community, and love.

**All: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY *We pray together*

P: Holy God,

**All: scripture tells us that you came to Joseph through an angel – loud and clear, impossible to miss. Scripture also tells us that Joseph listened. He rearranged his life to follow your invitation God. We long for that – all of that. We long to hear your voice – loud and clear, impossible to miss. We long for invitations to something more, something deeper. And we long to be like Joseph and find the courage to follow. So clean out our ears. Brush the dust off our hearts. Trace us back to our roots – back to Joseph – who heard and followed. With gratitude we listen. Amen.**

## CHILDREN'S WORD

### A READING FROM ISAIAH 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup>Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' <sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup>then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. <sup>8</sup>A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. <sup>9</sup>No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. <sup>10</sup>And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

WORD OF GOD, WORD OF LIFE. **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

### HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 1:18-25

**C: GLORY TO YOU, O LORD.**

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 with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 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. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel',

which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.      **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON – *We Can Choose a Better Way* - Intern Kris Kincaid

HYMN    *All Earth Is Hopeful*      **ELW 266**    All

- 1      **All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!  
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:  
this, the labor of people who struggle to see  
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.**
- 2      **People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:  
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";  
she conceived him, "God with us," our brother, whose birth  
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.**
- 3      **Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;  
new highways opened, new protocols declared.  
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!  
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!**
- 4      **We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.  
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live  
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see  
our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.**

#### APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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 — SHARING OF PEACE

GENEROSITY IN ACTION: OFFERING—OFFERTORY—GLOBE OFFERING

*Children are invited to bring forward an offering to the globe in the front of the church. Globe offerings will go to one of our global mission partners to be decided by our youth.*

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Eternal God,

**C: you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION – LORD’S PRAYER – INVITATION TO COMMUNION

DISTRIBUTION & HYMN: *Once in Royal David’s City* **ELW 269**

- 1 **Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.**
- 2 **He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.**
- 3 **And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;  
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above;  
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.**
- 4 **Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;  
there his children gather round, bright like stars, with glory crowned.**

COMMUNION BLESSING

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

BLESSING

P: As you leave this place, may you go knowing that **from generation to generation**, we have been claimed and loved. From generation to generation, God has been by our side. From generation to generation, we are not alone.

HYMN: *Joy to the World* **ELW 267** All

- 1 **Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;  
let ev’ry heart prepare him room and heav’n and nature sing,  
and heav’n and nature sing, and heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.**
- 2 **Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**
- 3 **No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.**
- 4 **He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love**

## SENDING

L: The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying, "Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon."

All: **May it be so. Amen.**

## POSTLUDE

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### PARTICIPANTS

PASTOR—Julie Rogness    INTERN—Kris Kincaid    ASSISTANT—Will Van Epps  
MUSIC—Tammy Hanson/Organ    GREETERS—Donna Berge, Erica, Boe & Hunter Aronson  
COMMUNION SERVERS—Tanya & Michael Short  
TECH CREW—Jim Braaten, Steve Johnson, Bill Lewis, Dan Rogness, Holly Aldorfer, Heidi Haugen, Barb Groth

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### CONNECTIONS

WEBSITE: [flickenyon.org](http://flickenyon.org)    FACEBOOK: **First Evangelical Lutheran Kenyon MN**  
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### REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Sid Strandemo, Lila Cole, Helen Aase, Jennifer Lerfald, Carol Ronning, Joy Estrem, Carolyn Walker, Glenn Ronning.

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### CALENDAR

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SUN/DEC 11	9 AM	ADVENT 3 WORSHIP w/Communion – In Person & Live-Streamed
	10 AM	SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SHOPPING
	7 PM	AA
MON/DEC 12	1:30 PM	Literary Guild
WED/DEC 14	6 PM	WED WORSHIP
	6:30 PM	Confirmation—HS Mentor Night
THU/DEC 15	5:30 PM	Sons of Norway
	6:30 PM	Scouts
	7 PM	AA
SUN/DEC 18	9 AM	ADVENT 4 WORSHIP w/Communion – In Person & Live-Streamed
		<i>Sunday School Pageant during Worship</i>
	7 PM	AA

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- > **Christmas Plant Slips are Due** – SUNDAY DECEMBER 18
- > **2023 Offering Envelopes** now available for pick-up in the narthex.
- > **Plastic Film Collection @ First** will be discontinued December 25.
- > **Christmas Service Times:** Chr Eve 12/24 – 4 pm    Chr Day 12/25 – 9 am    New Yrs Day 1/1 – 9 am
- > **Feed My Starving Children:** Saturday, January 7, 2023, 9 AM to 10:45 AM. Open to anyone (youth and adults) ages 12 and over. If under 12 need an adult chaperone. Must be over the age of 5. Location: 990 Lone Oak Road, Suite 136, Eagan, MN 55121    Follow this link to register: <http://www.fmssc.org/join-group?joincode=DBZ1NG>    Or contact [smhildebrandt7@gmail.com](mailto:smhildebrandt7@gmail.com). Let us know if you need a ride.

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
309 Forest St., Kenyon, MN 55946

Worship Bulletin  
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