

# Second Sunday of Advent

## December 7, 2025

### 10:30 AM



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**University Lutheran Church of Hope** is a welcoming, Christian community of faith centered on God's grace and called to demonstrate God's love for the world. University Lutheran Church of Hope is a Reconciling in Christ congregation with a commitment to racial equity.

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## Welcome. Peace be with you.

**We continue our holy experiment.** We're worshipping together in-person, and also offering a virtual option on Zoom and YouTube. Welcome to all!

### For those worshipping in-person, please remember:

- ❖ **To support the health and wellness of all those among us**, feel welcome to use masks and hand sanitizer, stay current with your vaccinations, and stay home as needed if you are unwell.
- ❖ **We honor one another's boundaries** by asking permission to be in close proximity, and finding alternate ways to greet one another and share the peace (a deep bow, the peace sign, an air hug, etc.). Our risk levels and comfort differ.
- ❖ **In our service today, we will share Holy Communion.** Ushers will direct you.
- ❖ **If you are new to the community** and wish to speak with a Pastor or be included in our communication and activities, fill out the blue slip in the pew rack and give it to an usher. We'll follow up. It's also just fine to be anonymous. To get more involved, check out our website: <http://www.ulch.org/> To receive the weekly enews, the Thursday Epistle, contact our church administrator at [ulch@ulch.org](mailto:ulch@ulch.org).
- ❖ **Children are welcome in worship.** Kids, grab your SPARK Story Bibles. Craft tables are available for families. Note: The nursery is not staffed, but is available for your use. The nursery is on the upper level of the education wing, most easily reached from the doors nearest the baptismal font.
- ❖ **After worship, enjoy the time to linger for conversation** in the lounge, courtyard and patio.

## Land Acknowledgment

*This Land Acknowledgment, and our response, are both a work in progress. We're actively engaged in a process to move beyond a simple acknowledgment, and toward a more active commitment. Watch for more opportunities for our community.*

We gather for worship on the land of our Creator. Many of us and our church building dwell in the traditional home of the Dakota people, and a land over which the Anishinaabeg people and others also moved. They gathered and ate food, rested, died and gave birth, and prayed here, and many still do.

# GATHERING

+ Indicates the assembly stand as able. Assembly parts are marked in **bold**.

**ELW** refers to the red hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. **ACS** refers to *All Creation Sings*, an *ELW* supplement.

## Prelude

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

arr. Harold Stover

## Welcome

## Call to Confession

Near the end of his ministry, John the Baptist reached out to Jesus with a heart full of anxiety. John was in jail. He knew he might not get out, so he asked Jesus, “Did I make a mistake? Am I making a difference here? Or did I get it all wrong?”

Like John, let us be fully honest with Jesus about our innermost thoughts. We can pour our heart out to God because God always meets us with grace, tenderness, and mercy.

So friends, let us go to God in prayer. Let us be honest, just like John the Baptist. Let us pray.

## Prayer of Confession

**On-the-move God, we have every reason to hold onto hope.**

**We have every reason to believe that spring will come,  
that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise.**

**And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers.**

**With anxious hearts we cry out to you,**

**“Will change ever come? Will things ever get better?**

**Will I ever make a difference?”**

**Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is shining.**

**Show us the places where you are on the move.**

**With open hearts we pray, Amen.**

## Words of Forgiveness

Family of faith, in our honesty, **we are heard.**

In our worries, **we are held.**

In our failings, **we are forgiven.**

In our fear, **we are not alone.**

Friends, this is the good news of the gospel! **When we’re running out of hope, God is still at work.**

Thanks be to God! **Amen.**

## + Gathering Hymn

On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry

ELW 249

## + Lighting the Advent Candle

In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of peace?

**We see glimmers of peace in the quiet of early morning, when people shake hands, when loved ones say they're sorry, and when the church sings together.**

You are right. Even in a fearful world, peace is all around us.

Today we light the candle of peace as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, peace is present. We only have to look for it.

*(The candle is lit.)*

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## Hymn

O Come, Take Heart

Text: Anna Strickland (2025)

*Sung to the tune for "O Come, O Come, Immanuel" (VENI IMMANUEL)*

**O come, O come though you feel unprepared**

**When courage fails you, do it scared.**

**Don't let the fear of making mistakes**

**Impede you from the path you're called to take.**

*Refrain:*

**Take heart, take heart! The One who calls to you**

**Will give you strength and see you through.**

## WORD

## Children's Message

### Reading - Isaiah 43:19-21

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Word of God. Word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

¡Voy a hacer algo nuevo! Ya está sucediendo, ¿no se dan cuenta? Estoy abriendo un camino en el desierto y ríos en lugares desolados. Me honran los animales salvajes, los chacales y los avestruces; yo hago brotar agua en el desierto, ríos en lugares desolados, para dar de beber a mi pueblo escogido, al pueblo que formé para mí mismo, para que proclame mi alabanza.

Palabra de Dios, palabra de vida.

**Demos gracias a Dios.**

1. **God came down that we may have light;  
God came down that we may have light;  
God came down that we may have light;  
hallelujah forevermore.**
2. **God came down that we may have hope;  
God came down that we may have hope;  
God came down that we may have hope;  
hallelujah forevermore.**

**+ Gospel Reading - Matthew 11:1-11**

The gospel according to Maatthew the eleventh chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities. When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Cuando Jesús terminó de dar instrucciones a sus doce discípulos, se fue de allí a enseñar y a predicar en otros pueblos. Juan estaba en la cárcel y, al enterarse de lo que Cristo estaba haciendo, envió a sus discípulos a que le preguntaran:—¿Eres tú el que ha de venir o debemos esperar a otro? Jesús respondió:—Vayan y cuéntenle a Juan lo que están oyendo y viendo: Los ciegos ven, los cojos andan, los que tienen alguna enfermedad en su piel son sanados, los sordos oyen, los muertos resucitan y a los pobres se les anuncian las buenas noticias. Dichoso el que no tropieza por causa mía. Mientras se iban los discípulos de Juan, Jesús comenzó a hablarle a la multitud acerca de Juan: «¿Qué salieron a ver al desierto? ¿Una caña sacudida por el viento? Si no, ¿qué salieron a ver? ¿A un hombre vestido con ropa fina? Claro que no, pues los que usan ropa de lujo están en los palacios de los reyes. Entonces, ¿qué salieron a ver? ¿A un profeta? Sí, les digo, y más que profeta. Este es de quien está escrito:» "Yo estoy por enviar a mi mensajero delante de ti, el cual preparará tu camino". Les aseguro que entre los mortales no se ha levantado nadie más grande que Juan el Bautista; sin embargo, el más pequeño en el reino de los cielos es más grande que él.

El Evangelio del Señor.

**Alabanza a ti, oh Cristo!**

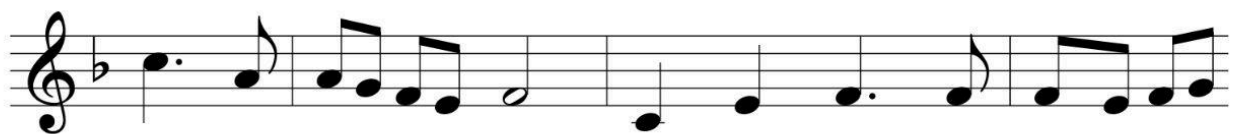
**Sermon - Pastor Maria Anderson-Lippert**

**+ Hymn of the Day**

Looking Out a Prison Window      Text: Anna Strickland (2025)  
*Commissioned by Sanctified Art* Music: Henry John Gauntlett (1849)



Look - ing out a pri - son win - dow, who can  
All the things that keep us cap - tive shrink our  
To our sib - lings still im - pris - oned be - hind  
We are called to li - ber - a - tion, to be

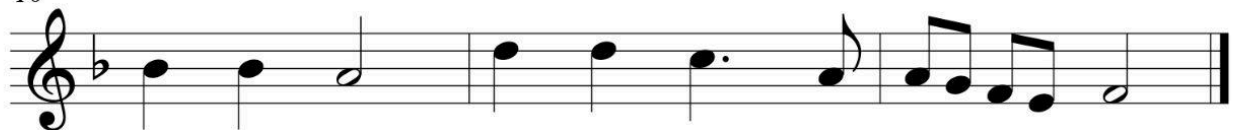


see the flow - ers bloom? Hope dis - solves like dreams at  
op - ti - mis - tic faith We must prac - tice hope on  
bars of steel or fear Bring the mes - sage from our  
freed and to set free Break - ing chains of world - ly



day-break leav - ing us an emp - ty room Still be - yond what  
pur - pose e - ven when our spi - rits break 'Til at last our  
Sav - ior: hope is real and dawn - ing near Tell the gos - pel  
pow - ers who would claim our li - ber - ty Bo - dy, spi - rit,

10



we can see God is al - ways plant - ing seeds  
free - dom comes And we fin - ally see the sun  
all a - round New life springs up from the ground  
mind and heart Li - ber - ate each cap - tive part

## Affirmation of Faith

We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars. We have seen the longest night, and *still* we believe.

We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow.

We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people.

So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.

We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst.

We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: *Unto us, love is born.*

We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love. So *still*, we believe. Amen.

## Prayers of the People

*Following each petition:*

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

## + Sharing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

La paz de Cristo sea siempre con ustedes.

**And also with you.**

**Y también contigo.**

*All are invited to share the peace of Christ using these or similar words "Peace be with you" or "La paz del Señor."*

## MEAL

### Offertory

O Radiant Dawn

James MacMillan (2008)

*Hope Choir*

O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of Justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. Isaiah had prophesied, "The people who walked in darkness have seen the great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone." Amen.

*Thank you for your continued generosity! Donations may be sent electronically or by mail, or placed in the offering plate in the center of our space as you come forward for Holy Communion. A QR code is available on the last page of the bulletin.*

## +Offertory Prayer

Let us pray. Creator God,

**in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good. Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all. Amen.**

## +The Great Thanksgiving

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to our God.**

Let us give thanks to our gracious God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed...join their unending hymn:

## + Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy

Text adapted by Paul Stever

Music: NUN KOMM DER HEIDEN HEILAND (1524, J. Walter)



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly One, God of pow - er, God of might,  
heav - en shines with splen - dor bright. All the earth will see your light.  
Loud ho - san - nas fill the heights round the Bless - ed One, Most High.  
We with an - gels in the sky, glo - ri - a, ho - san - na cry.

## +Eucharistic Prayer and Words of Institution

### +The Lord's Prayer

Our Creator, Our Mother, Our Father in  
heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom  
come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our  
sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us  
from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the  
glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Creador nuestro, Madre nuestra, Padre nuestro que  
estás en el cielo, santificado sea tu nombre. Venga tu  
reino. Hágase tu voluntad en la tierra como en el  
cielo. Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día. Perdona  
nuestras ofensas como también nosotros perdonamos  
a los que nos ofenden. No nos dejes caer en tentación  
y líbranos del mal. Porque tuyo es el reino, tuyo es el  
poder y tuya es la gloria, ahora y siempre. Amén.

## Holy Communion

*We believe that Jesus Christ is present in Holy Communion with gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation. All who hunger for the presence of Christ in their life are invited to partake. By our participation in this meal and blessing, we are strengthened in faith and in life. All are welcome to commune.*

### ***If you are at home and sitting with others...***

*When sharing the bread with someone, say to them: "This is the body of Christ, given for you." When sharing the wine or grape juice, say, "This is the blood of Christ, shed for you."*

### ***If you are at home on your own...***

*Hear the voice of the pastor naming these promises of grace and life for you. If you'd prefer a blessing, hear these promises: "You are a beloved child of God. May God strengthen you with grace through Christ for all we face today."*

### ***If you are worshiping in-person today...***

*We invite you to come forward to receive the elements and hear the words of promise, or to receive a blessing. Following the direction of the ushers, come forward: pick up a cup, gather around the table, receive the bread (gluten free is available), the servers will pour into your cup either the red wine or white grape juice, place used cups in the basket. If you'd prefer, coming forward to the front for a blessing is always an option. Children of all ages are welcome to partake in the bread and juice at Holy Communion.*

### ***If you seek healing prayers today...***

*A healing minister is available during Holy Communion this morning. If you'd like prayers for healing for yourself, for those you love, or for other situations, you are invited to come to one of the healing ministers. You can ask for specific prayers, or simply ask them to pray with you...and they will. During this time, you may also dip into the baptismal waters and remember the promises, and light candles for situations around the world and close to home.*

<b>Music During Communion</b>	Comfort, Comfort Now My People	ELW 256
	Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus	ELW 254
	Prepare the Royal Highway	ELW 264

## **+Table Blessing**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

**Amen.**

## **+Prayer after Communion**

Loving God, In a world racked with fear, you gather us together. You set the table. You meet us here. You nourish our bodies as you nourish our spirits. You remind us that this is a joyful feast, and that fear cannot win every time. So with renewed courage, with renewed hope, with renewed conviction, send us out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray, **Amen.**

## **Announcements**

## **SENDING**

<b>+Sending Hymn</b>	There's a Voice in the Wilderness	ELW 255
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## **+Blessing**

In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit. May you reach for each other's hands.  
May you choose courage whenever you can. And in all things, may you remember that good news is louder than fear. In the name of the one who calls, the one who sends, and the one who journeys with us.  
**Amen.**

## **+Dismissal**

Go in peace and be not afraid.  
**Thanks be to God!**

Vaya en paz y no tengáis miedo.  
**Gracias a Dios!**

## **Postlude**

Prepare the Royal Highway

arr. Egil Hovland

## **What do you fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent and Christmas**

*(from Sanctified Art, What do you fear, 2025)*

"Luke's Gospel begins the story of Jesus with this opening line: "In the time of Herod..." This detail may seem minor to modern readers; however, it reveals layers of information about the fearful world Jesus entered, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability. A world not so unlike our own. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, we hear the whispers of angels delivering a surprising message: "Do not fear." When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God's redemptive story, they do not deny their fears—they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, "Here I am, Lord." When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope?

This Advent series takes seriously the angels' message and trusts that Christ's birth truly is good news of great joy for all people. The resources look closely at the fear and terror looming in the background during the time of King Herod and invite us to consider the fears we hold now. Fear can divide and paralyze us and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? Can we acknowledge fear without letting it rule us? Might we catalyze our fears into love and action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work?

As you journey through this season, may your hope become gritty and resilient. May you remember: hope that trembles is still hope. This season, let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear."

**Staff at University Lutheran  
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**Sunday Opener/Closer, Worship Tech**

*Please share our open position*

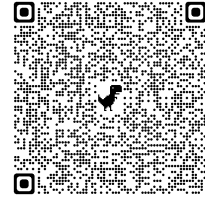
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Office hours: 9am to 2pm weekdays

**Today’s Worship Leaders**

Pastor Amanda Simons, Pastor Maria Anderson-Lippert (presiding ministers); Scott Hvizdos (assisting minister); Hope Choir, Paul Stever (musicians); Ann Agrimson, Jack Dant, Bruce Eldevik, Tim Hopkins (communion servers); Evan Peterson (lector); Matt Fry (worship tech facilitator); Sara Tuffveson Doure (greeter); Leena Rapacz, Uli Koester, Williams Santana (ushers); Layla Rapacz, Lydia Rapacz (acolytes); Serafina, Scheel (worship prep); Bruce Eldevik, Rosalie Eldevik (communion clean-up); Donna Neste, Ann Rolle (healing prayer)

## Christmas Social: Share, Pose, and Bake! (TODAY)

Mark your calendars for a festive pre-Christmas celebration on **Sunday, December 7** in the Church Lounge!

We're inviting everyone to join us for two hours of fun and faith:

- **9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**
- **11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

Come and enjoy these three holiday highlights:

1. **Favorite Faith Traditions Display:** Bring your cherished Advent or Christmas tradition to share and display! This could be a beloved Nativity scene (Crèche), a special tradition like financial giving to charity, a "Birthday Party for Jesus," or another meaningful practice. Fill out a brief description of your tradition on the card provided. *Tables will be set up in the Lounge for your display. Please arrive by 9:15 a.m. to set up your tradition.*
2. **Nativity Photo Booth:** Have you ever wanted to be an angel, shepherd, or magi? Get dressed up and snap a festive photo in our fun Nativity Pageant Photo Booth!
3. **Holiday Bread Bake Distribution:** Need some delicious last-minute Christmas goodies or gifts? Peruse and donate for our delicious selection of holiday quick breads!!

Don't miss this chance to celebrate the spirit of the season together! **Questions?** Contact Rebecca Tetlie at [rebecca.tetlie@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.tetlie@gmail.com). If you would like to help with the holiday quick bread baking, contact Shelly Parry at [mmparry@comcast.net](mailto:mmparry@comcast.net).

## December Sunday Forums (9:30am)

**December 14 - More Music at Hope – Part Three:** We will learn more about meter, and how it feels to sing religious songs in the rhythm of dances and marches. We will hear what it's like to direct the Hope choir. And we will study the history of the Service of Lessons and Carols as it developed after World War I, and how we carry on that tradition at Hope. *Presented by Marty Lewis-Hunstiger*

**December 21 and 28 - No Sunday Forum:** Coffee hours after worship provided in the lounge to mingle with friends and be a welcoming presence to visitors and newcomers.

### **Fellowship Meal (December 14)**

Have you started thinking about Holiday Cooking? Share a favorite side dish or dessert at the Fellowship Meal on December 14. Mashed potatoes and meatballs will be served for the meal after the church service. We need your holiday treats to complete the festivities. Bring friends and family. Any questions? contact Sheila at [shougen03@gmail.com](mailto:shougen03@gmail.com).

### **Christmas Caroling (December 14)**

Join others after the fellowship meal to bring joy and song to some of our members who do not get to church very often. If you'd like to join in the fun, contact Pastor Maria at [mariaa@ulch.org](mailto:mariaa@ulch.org).

### **Holden Evening Prayer (December 17, 6:30-7pm)**

Join us for Marty Haugen's Holden Evening Prayer service music with astronomy projections, in the chapel (in person only, no streaming) at 6:30pm.

### **Christmas Eve Worship December 24, 4pm (3:30pm prelude)**

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#### **Poetry for the season written by Sarah Speed (2025, *Sanctified Art*)**

##### **God in the Kitchen**

I called home my first semester of college. I told my mom I was fine,  
but I was homesick. She must have heard the truth in my voice.  
The ache ate at me. It was a long, slow song, a million tiny ants  
slurping the juice from a peach. I was tender and bruised,  
in the doldrums of it all. But she could hear all of that. So three states away,  
she preheated the oven. Three states away,  
she tossed blueberries in a thin layer of flour. Three states away,  
she dusted a layer of streusel over the soft peaks  
of a dozen warm muffins. And three days later,  
I unboxed a package from home—  
a dozen blueberry muffins, a love letter with my name on it,  
a reminder that I was not alone.  
If you're running out of hope, count to three.  
God is in the kitchen. She's just waiting for yeast to rise.