



**OUR REDEEMER**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
GRAND PRAIRIE

*You are welcome here!*  
**We are disciples of Jesus, growing  
in Faith, Hope, and Love.**

**Address**

4729 S. Carrier Parkway  
Grand Prairie, TX 75052



**Phone**

972-642-5683



**Website**

[www.OurRedeemerGP.org](http://www.OurRedeemerGP.org)



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**Worship Times**

Sunday 10:15 am  
Wednesday 7:00 pm



**Pastor**

Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal



*December 10, 2023*  
*Second Sunday of*  
*Advent*

# Gathering

## ✠ INTRODUCTION

*John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.*

## ✠ CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

C **Amen.**

P God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Everlasting God,

C **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.**

P Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

C **Amen.**

## ✠ GATHERING HYMN – Prepare the Royal Highway (ELW#264)

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## ✠ GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

## ✘ LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again. You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare. We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth.

C Amen.

## ✘ ADVENT HYMN – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (ELW #257) verse 3

O come, O come, O Lord of might,  
As to your tribes on Sinai's height,  
In ancient times you gave the law  
In cloud, and majesty, and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

## ✘ PRAYER OF THE DAY

A Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

# Word

## ✘ FIRST LESSON – Isaiah 40:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### ✠ **RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**

<sup>1</sup>You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;  
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people  
and blotted out all their sins.**

<sup>8</sup>I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;  
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

<sup>9</sup>**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,  
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

<sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

<sup>11</sup>**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,  
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,  
and our land will yield its increase.

<sup>13</sup>**Righteousness shall go before the LORD  
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

### ✠ **SECOND LESSON – 2 Peter 3:8-15a**

<sup>8</sup>Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

<sup>11</sup>Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15a</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are able to welcome the gospel.*

✠ **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – (ELW #262)**

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community

Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994

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✠ **GOSPEL – Mark 1:1-8**

P The Holy Gospel, according to Mark, the first chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

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

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## ✠ SERMON

## ✠ HYMN OF THE DAY– Comfort, Comfort Now My People (ELW #256)

## ✠ APOSTLES' CREED (ELW p. 105)

P With the whole Church, let us confess our faith:

C **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 OF INTERCESSION

A With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

*A brief silence.*

A Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed. Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

A Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal. Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures. Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

A Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, commonwealths, political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. Merciful God,

**C receive our prayer.**

A Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety, or all who feel lonely or forgotten, especially those we name before you, silently or aloud. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain. Merciful God,

**C receive our prayer.**

A Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season. Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments. Protect expectant parents. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil. Merciful God,

**C receive our prayer.**

A With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. Inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth. Merciful God,

**C receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

A Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

**C Amen.**

## ✠ PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C And also with you.**

## ✠ OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, here and around the world.*

*After the offering is gathered, the gifts are brought forward to the altar.*

*As this happens, please stand as you are able for the offering prayer and meal.*

## ✠ OFFERING PRAYER

A God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C Amen.**

# Meal

## ✠ GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

**C We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

P 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 #190)

**C Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest.**

## ✠ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.



P Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

P With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

**C Come, Lord Jesus.**

P Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**C Come, Holy Spirit.**

P All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

## ✠ LORD'S PRAYER

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

**C 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.**

## ✠ INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.

Come, take your place at the table.

## ✠ DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

## ✠ COMMUNION HYMN – We Are Waiting for Jesus (ACS #905)

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## ✠ PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

✠ **BLESSING**

P The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

✠ **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

✠ **SENDING HYMN – Blessed is the One (ACS#929)**

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✠ **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Keep awake.

C **Thanks be to God.**

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**This year's Christmas Eve Service will be held at  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church on Sunday evening,  
December 24<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m.**

**Food to bring this holiday season for Grand Prairie Food and  
Clothing Co-op:**

Canned soup (small cans and large cans)  
Canned peas and canned mixed veggies  
Canned meat (tuna, Spam, chili, ravioli, chicken)  
Canned gravy and gravy packets  
Dry beans and dry rice  
Mac and Cheese (dinner box)  
Spaghetti  
Peanut butter

Any of the above items can be brought to the church and placed in the bin provided in the Narthex. **THANKS!!!** - for helping us be Disciples of Jesus by serving our community in this way.

## ✠ SERVING TODAY

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal
Music Director:	John Zacharias
Altar:	Renee Swanjord
Assisting Minister:	Renee Swanjord
Lay Reader:	Hattie Hammer
Usher:	Kris Davies
Videographer:	Gene Davies
Communion Cup Holder:	Meleah Zapata

Children in attendance are welcome to break away during our services with our Sunday School teachers. Those teachers include Cheri Oertel (director), Julie Bothun, Katie Valencia and Phyllis Bell.

If anyone would be interested in volunteering once a month to teach Sunday School during the service, please contact the church office or talk to Cheri Oertel.

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