



Isaiah

had foretold it

A Light in
the Dark

November 30-31, 2025

Welcome to Bethlehem!

We welcome our guests who are worshipping with us today. Thanks for joining us! We are a community of ordinary people who gather to hear the message of God's grace in Jesus. We believe that he is our savior—and yours, too!

We'd love to have you join us again soon. Please take a moment to fill out a connection card (located in the back of the pew in front of you). The blue side is for members to fill out and the yellow side is for visitors.

A lounge for parents needing to quiet small children is located at the rear of church. The room has a clear window for viewing and is equipped with a speaker system.

A hearing loop is available in the worship area and fellowship hall. Set your hearing aid to “t-coil” or ask for headphones at the A/V desk in the back of church.



Today's Worship

We begin the season of Advent today. It is time to prepare for the coming Messiah. Our Advent worship theme this year is “Isaiah had foretold it.” We will be looking at different pictures or prophecies from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah regarding the promised Savior. Today's picture is “Light in the Darkness.”

To Prepare Our Hearts for Worship

Lord, I'm here to worship you. You are here, too, to speak to me. Give me a focused heart ready to listen to you. Show me how I've failed this week, so that I can see all the more how you have loved me. Give me a heart that loves to praise and thank you for your everlasting goodness to me.

We Gather for Worship

Service of the Word from Christian Worship 1993

Hymn: Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates

Blue Hymnal, p.305 sts. 1-2

Pastor: The grace of our Lord — Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

We Confess our Sins & Receive God's Forgiveness

P: We've come into God's presence. He created us to love and serve him. But we haven't listened to him. We deserve only his anger and punishment. Let's confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

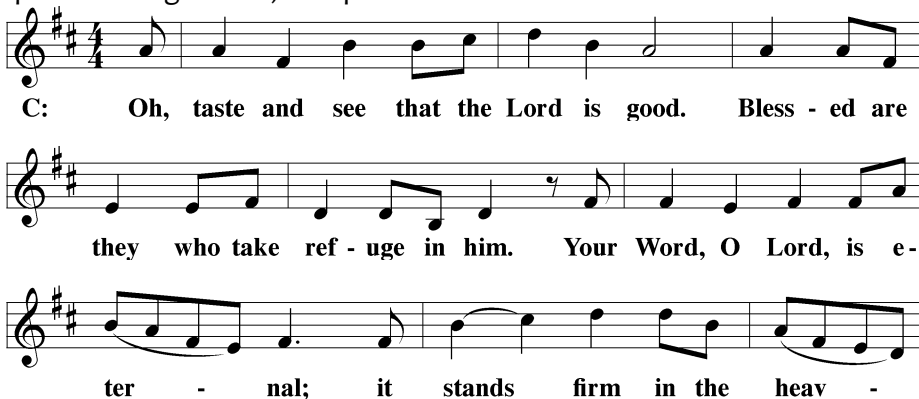
Silence for meditation and reflection.

P: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.

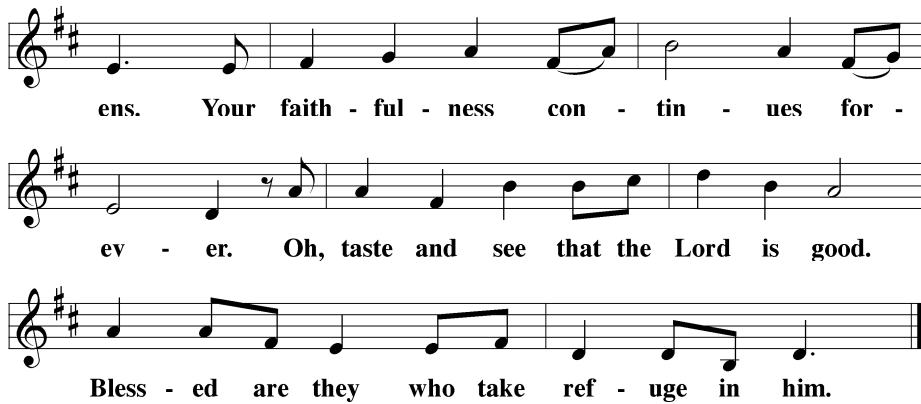
Prayer and Praise

P: In the peace of forgiveness, let's praise the Lord.



The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes or measures.

C: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Bless - ed are
they who take ref - uge in him. Your Word, O Lord, is e -
ter - nal; it stands firm in the heav -



Today's Prayer

P: Stir up your power, Lord, and come. Protect us by your strength, and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

First Reading

Isaiah 2:1–5

¹This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

²In the last days

the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established
as the highest of the mountains;
it will be exalted above the hills,
and all nations will stream to it.

³Many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.
He will teach us his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths.”

The law will go out from Zion,
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plowshares

and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

⁵Come, descendants of Jacob,
let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Psalm 80

Selected Verses Read Responsively

P: Hear us, Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

C: Awaken your might; come and save us. Restore us, O God; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

P: How long, Lord God Almighty, will your anger smolder against the prayers of your people?

C: You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have made them drink tears by the bowlful.

P: You have made us an object of derision to our neighbors, and our enemies mock us.

C: Restore us, God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

P: Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand, the son of man you have raised up for yourself.

C: Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name.

P: Restore us, Lord God Almighty;

C: make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

Second Reading

Romans 13:11–14

¹¹And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹²The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.

¹⁴Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

Children's Message

Gospel Reading

Matthew 24:36–44

³⁶“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

³⁸For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

⁴²“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Today's Hymn: Savior of the Nations, Come

Blue Hymnal, p.301

Sermon

“Dark Times Call for a Walk in the Light”

Isaiah 2:1-5

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Offering

Your offerings are just one way you support the gospel ministry we do, and we thank God for them! Guests are welcome to give but need not feel obligated. If you'd like to give online, scan the QR code on the right side of the page or go to bethlehem-wels.com/giving.



Give Online

Please also use this time to sign the connection card located in the back of the pew in front of you and quietly meditate. Sign the blue side if you're a member, or the yellow side if you're a visitor. Drop it off in the offering plates as they're passed along your row.

The Church's Prayer

- P: Heavenly Father, giver of every good and perfect gift, we praise you for the grace that enriches our lives and enables us to serve you with joyful hearts.
- C: As we begin another winter season, remind us of your constant presence and protection.**
- P: Bless the ministry of WELS Christian Giving. Through their efforts, inspire your people to use earthly blessings with wisdom, generosity, and trust in your promises.
- C: Teach us to see all that we have as gifts from you, to enjoy and to share with our neighbor in need.**
- P: We pray for the work of the Hope Center in Appleton, that it may continue to be a place of compassion, dignity, and gospel comfort.
- C: Strengthen its staff, volunteers, and all who come seeking help. Let your love be evident in every act of service and every word of encouragement.**
- P: Bless also the ministry of the Apple Valley Food Pantry. As the cold months draw near and needs increase, provide volunteers, resources, and opportunities to care for those facing hunger.
- C: Move us to give generously and to reflect Christ's love to those who struggle.**
- P: Lord of creation, as winter begins, protect those vulnerable to the cold—especially the elderly, the homeless, and families in financial hardship.
- C: Guard travelers, bless first responders and public workers who keep our communities safe, and give us hearts eager to help neighbors in need.**
- P: Gracious God, continue to strengthen our congregation in faith and love. Use us as your instruments—joyful in giving, bold in serving, and confident in Christ our Savior.

Special Prayers

Lord's Prayer

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Hymn: The Advent of Our King

Blue Hymnal, p.309 sts. 1–2, 5–6

Closing Prayer

P: Almighty God, thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing

P: May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Hymn: May the Peace of God

Blue Hymnal, p.929

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