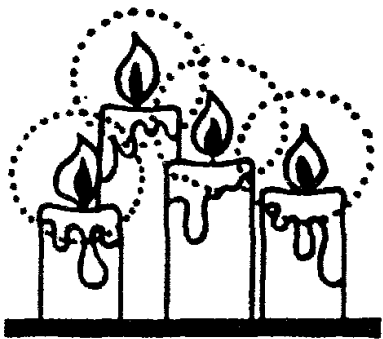



<p>Fourth Sunday of Advent</p> <p>December 24, 2023 8:30 a.m.</p>	
<p><i>Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Setting 3</i></p>	
<p>Saron Lutheran Church</p> <p>Jeanne Larsen, Interim Pastor</p> <p>1656 Main St Mail: PO Box 964 Strasburg CO 80136</p> <p>303-622-4303 saronstrasburg@outlook.com saronstrasburg.org</p>	
<p><i>Welcome to Saron worship—in person or on Facebook Live!</i></p> <p><i>Large-print copies of the bulletin are available at Saron's entrances, and from Saron's website.</i></p>	

Prelude

Kurt Elliott

Welcome/Announcements

Lenore Schmidt

The assembly stands.

Confession and Forgiveness

Lenore Schmidt

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

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.

Everlasting God, 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.**

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. **Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Sandy Plaven

Hymn | ELW 257, stz. 7: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

7 O come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
refresh the hearts that long for you;
restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Prayer

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior. **Amen.**

Hymn | ELW 257, stz. 8: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Gathering Hymn | ELW 251: My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness



1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav - ior's praise!
2 To all who live in ho - ly fear your mer - cy ev - er flows.
3 To Is - ra - el, your ser - vant blest, your help is ev - er sure;



You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.
With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem - ing hearts ex - pose.
the prom - ise to our par - ents made their chil - dren will se - cure.



Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless - ing shall pro - claim—
The ruth - less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;
Sing glo - ry to the Ho - ly One, give hon - or to the Word,



great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.
the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.
and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.

Text: *With One Voice*, 1995, based on the Magnificat

Music: KINGSFOLD, English folk tune

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Greeting

Lenore Schmidt

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

Leader

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Assembly

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have

For the reign of God, and for

mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peace through-out the world, for the u-ni-ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord. For your

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peo - ple here who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your

word, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have

Help, save, and de - fend us, O God.

mer - cy. A - men.

Text: *Lutheran Book of Worship*, adapt. Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: *Now the Feast and Celebration*, Marty Haugen

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Prayer of the Day

Lenore Schmidt

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The assembly is seated.

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Read responsively.

- ¹Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing;
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.
- ²**For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is established forever;
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**
- ³“I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:
- ⁴**I will establish your line forever,
and preserve your throne for all generations.’ ”**

¹⁹You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people:

“I have set the crown upon a warrior
and have exalted one chosen out of the people.

²⁰**I have found David my servant;
with my holy oil have I anointed him.**

²¹My hand will hold him fast
and my arm will make him strong.

²²**No enemy shall deceive him,
nor shall the wicked bring him down.**

²³I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

²⁴**My faithfulness and steadfast love are with him,
and he shall be victorious through my name.**

²⁵I will set his hand on the sea,
and his right hand on the rivers.

²⁶**He will say to me, ‘You are my father,
my God, and the rock of my salvation.’**

Second Reading | Romans 16:25–27

Scott Gerrard

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The assembly stands.

Gospel Acclamation

ELW 254: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

The assembly is seated.

Gospel | Luke 1:1–25

Scott Gerrard

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, ²just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, ³I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

⁵In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶Both of them were righteous before God, living

blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord.

⁷But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

⁸Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. ¹⁰Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” ¹⁸Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.” ¹⁹The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.”

²¹Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. ²²When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, ²⁵“This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

Gospel Acclamation

ELW 254: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

Luke 1:26–38

Scott Gerrard

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For

nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Solo | “Ave Maria” –Franz Schubert

Karen Fagan

Luke 1:39–55

Sandy Plaven

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

⁴⁶And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

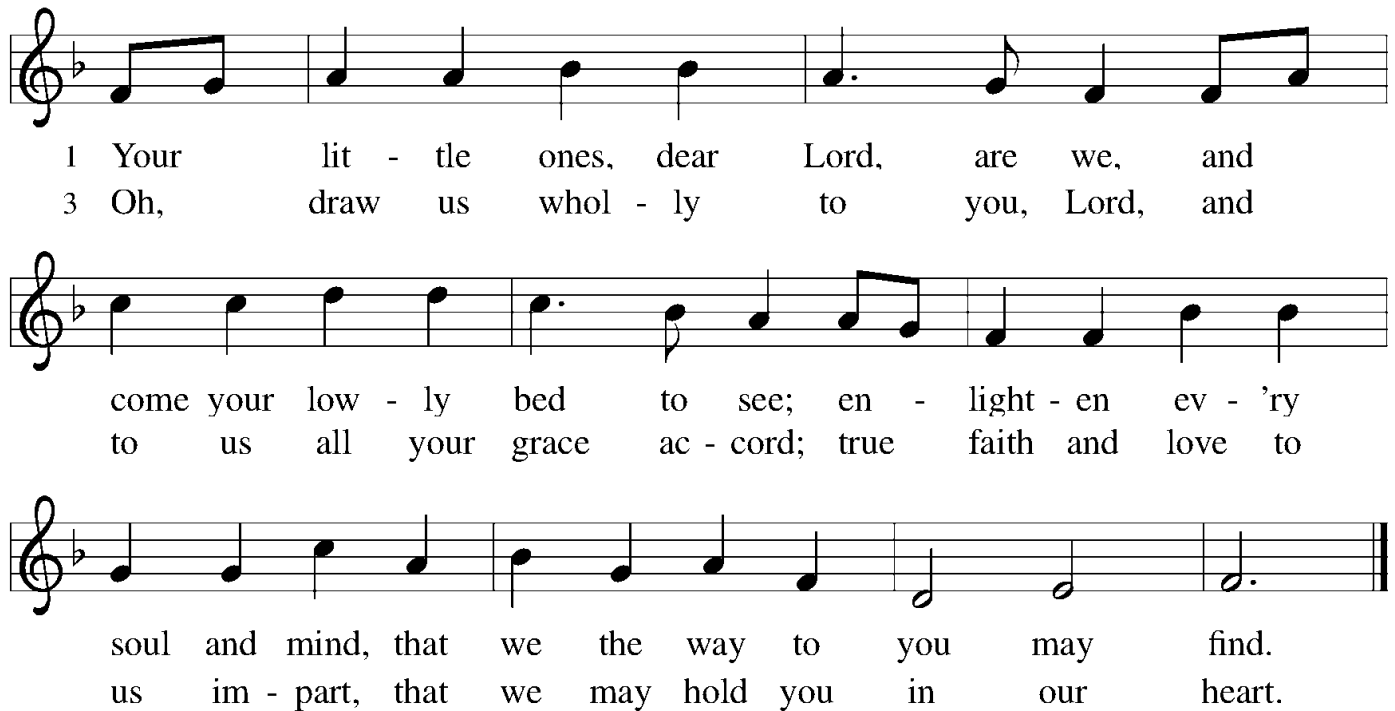
⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly stands.

Hymn of the Day | ELW 286: Your Little Ones, Dear Lord



1 Your lit - tle ones, dear Lord, are we, and
3 Oh, draw us whol - ly to you, Lord, and
come your low - ly bed to see; en - light - en ev - 'ry
to us all your grace ac - cord; true faith and love to
soul and mind, that we the way to you may find.
us im - part, that we may hold you in our heart.

Text: Hans A. Brorson, 1694–1764; tr. Harriet Krauth Spaeth, 1845–1925, alt.

Music: HER KOMMER DINE ARME SMÅ, Johann A. P. Schulz, 1747–1800

Apostles' Creed

Lenore Schmidt

**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

Lenore Schmidt

After each petition: Merciful God, receive our prayer.

Peace

Lenore Schmidt

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace. Then the assembly is seated.

Offering

“Mary, Did You Know?” —Mark Lowry and Buddy Green, arr. Jack Schrader

*Thank you for your offerings that support the ministry of Saron Lutheran Church (offering plate)! Your noisy offerings will support **ELCA Good Gifts Family Farms** (jar). Offerings may also be given online through [“Tithe-ly” as linked on the website.](#)*

The assembly stands.

Offering Prayer

Lenore Schmidt

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. Amen.

Thanksgiving for the Word

Lenore Schmidt

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Lenore Schmidt

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.

Blessing

Lenore Schmidt

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. **Amen.**

Sending Song | ELW 267: Joy to the World



1	Joy	to	the	world,	the	Lord	is	come!	Let	earth	re -
2	Joy	to	the	earth,	the	Sav -	ior	reigns!	Let	all	their
3	No	more	let	sin	and	sor -	row	grow	nor	thorns	in -
4	He	rules	the	world	with	truth	and	grace	and	makes	the



ceive	her	king;	let	ev -	'ry	heart	pre -	pare	him
songs	em -	ploy,	while	fields	and	floods,	rocks,	hills,	and
fest	the	ground;	he	comes	to	make	his	bless -	ings
na -	tions	prove	the	glo -	ries	of	his	righ -	teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

Dismissal

Lenore Schmidt

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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Musician: Kurt Elliott | **Worship Leader:** Lenore Schmidt
Cantor: Karen Fagan | **Readers:** Sandy Plaven, Scott Gerrard
Sound: Patrick Tangeman

Welcome to Christmas Eve worship at Saron!

At 5 p.m. today, Sunday, December 24, Pastor Jeanne leads Christmas Eve worship at Saron as we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord with beloved carols, the traditional Christmas story, candlelight and Holy Communion. Welcome!

Saron Lutheran Church – celebrating 110 years!

Mission Statement:

*Saron Lutheran welcomes all in the name of Christ:
to know Christ's love | to grow in Christ's love | to go in Christ's love*