

Prince of Peace
Evangelical Lutheran Church



Christmas
TREES

Christmas Trees:
The Tree of Rebellion

Midweek Advent 1

December 4, 2024



“Learning and sharing the gospel of Christ the Prince of Peace.”

Prince of Peace
Evangelical Lutheran Church
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WELCOME!

Welcome to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. We pray that the time spent here in God’s house helps you to appreciate how dearly God loves you! He invested the life blood of his one and only Son into your salvation and offers the blessings of that sacrifice to us through Word and Sacrament! May God bless our worship today!

THEME FOR TODAY

It is the most widely recognized symbol of the season—the Christmas tree. Other religions had used evergreen branches as ceremonial decoration to represent eternal life. However, in the 16th century, the Lutherans of Germany took the next step of bringing freshly cut evergreen trees indoors for the holidays. They decorated the trees with red ornaments, symbolizing the blood of Christ, and with candles, symbolizing the light of Christ. They would top the tree with a star or angel, both important in the story of Jesus’ birth. The Christmas tree is a treasured part of our Christmas tradition. In our midweek Advent services, we will look at some Christmas trees. They are not evergreens, nor decorated with tinsel or garland or bright lights. Rather, we will look at some of the trees in the Scripture that point us to the Christ. These Christmas trees, more than the decorative ones, remind us of why the birth of Jesus Christ is so important and worthy of celebration.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Scripture says it was hard to miss, because God placed it “in the middle of the garden.” Adam and Eve were allowed to eat from every tree in Eden except that one. Obedience would have been one way to demonstrate they loved and trusted God. By disobeying God, Adam and Eve sinned by failing to fully trust him. Instead, they loved the thought of being in control more than they loved God. It was rebellion. Still today, we rebel against our good and gracious God when we love or trust anything more than him. That Tree of Rebellion points to the need for Christ. We needed God to send a Savior who would succeed where we fail. The Christ would be the only man who ever loved and trusted God perfectly. More, while hanging on a tree, the Christ would shed his blood for our rebellion. It is the first tree in the Bible that serves as a Christmas tree. . . a tree that points us to Christ—the Tree of Rebellion.

December 4th	—	The Tree of Rebellion
December 11 th	—	The Tree of Promise
December 18 th	—	The Tree of Life

Evening Prayer

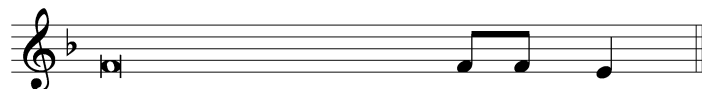
Stand

Opening Sentences

CW 215



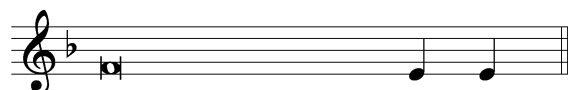
Jesus Christ is the light of the world,



the light no darkness can o - ver - come.



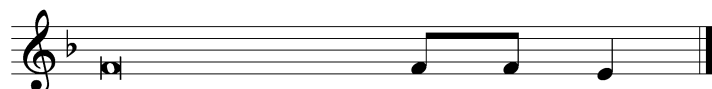
Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,



and the day is almost o - ver.



Be our light and scat - ter the darkness,



and hear our evening prayer and praise.

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Hymn of Light

CW 216



1 Glad - d'ning light of pur - est glo - ry, shin - ing
2 In the fad - ing light of eve - ning, as the
3 For your gift of life un - end - ing, joy - ful



down from heav'n on high, from the ev - er -
set - ting sun de - parts, Fa - ther, Son, and
voic - es ev - er sing hymns of praise that



liv - ing Fa - ther— hail, most bless - ed Je - sus Christ!
Ho - ly Spir - it— we a - dore you, Lord our God.
right - ly hon - or, Son of God, your sav - ing name.

Text: Michael D. Schultz

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Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who led your people Israel with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ. May his Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, for you are merciful and you love your whole creation. We, your creatures, glorify you—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Be seated

Psalm 141

CW 217

Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense, the lift - ing up
of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice. O Lord, I
call to you; come to me quick - ly; hear my voice when I
cry to you. Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense,
the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

Tune: David Schack Tune: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 708875

Let the incense of our prayers rise before you, O Lord, and let your mercy descend on us, that we may sing your praises with the Church on earth and forever in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Psalm

Psalm 1

¹Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
²but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
³That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.
⁴Not so the wicked!
They are like chaff
that the wind blows away.
⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
⁶For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Lord God, grant us your Holy Spirit that we may hear and believe your Word. Cleanse our minds and renew our hearts that we may live for you here and hereafter; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

567 What Adam's Disobedience Cost

CW 567

¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

²The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

⁴“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

¹⁰He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

¹¹And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

¹²The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.

¹⁵And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Song of Mary

CW 218

Refrain

My soul glo - ri - fies the Lord, and my spir - it re -
 joic - es in God, my Sav - ior. My soul glo - ri - fies the
 Lord, and my spir - it re - joic - es in God, my Sav - ior.

1 For _____ he has been mindful
 2 For the Mighty One has done great things for me—
 3 He has per - formed mighty deeds with his arm;
 4 He has filled the hungry with good things

1 of the humble state of his ser - vant.
 2 and holy is his name.
 3 he has scattered those who are proud in their in - most thoughts.
 4 but has sent the rich away emp - ty.

1 For in - deed from now on
 2 His _____ mercy extends to those who fear him,
 3 He has brought down rulers from their thrones
 4 He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

1 all generations will call me bless - ed. v. 2
 2 from generation to gener - a - tion. Refrain
 3 but has lifted up the hum - ble. v. 4
 4 to Abraham and his descendants for - ev - er. Refrain

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Offering

Stand

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies, that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Benedicamus



Let us praise the Lord.



Thanks be to God.

Blessing



The grace of our Lord + Je - sus Christ and the love of God



and the fellowship of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.



A - men.

Be seated

789 All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night

CW 789

Acknowledgments

Evening Prayer from Christian Worship

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