

Prince of Peace  
Evangelical Lutheran Church



Christmas  
TREES

Christmas Trees:  
The Tree of Promise

Midweek Advent 2

December 11, 2024



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

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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.

In recent years there has been an explosion of companies that help you trace your family tree uncovering the history of your ancestors. Interestingly, Matthew’s Gospel begins by tracing Jesus’ family tree. There are multiple reasons for this. First, providing the genealogy of Jesus proves that he is true man, exactly what we needed our Savior to be if he was going to take our place. Second, it demonstrates God’s grace, for in Jesus’ family tree you will find individuals whose heinous sins are recorded in Scripture: murder, prostitution, etc. The Christ is not the enemy of sinners. He is our brother. Finally, this family tree shows that God keeps all his promises. God had promised multiple believers—Eve, Abraham, David—that the Savior would be one of their descendants. This week, we look at a very different type of Christmas tree—the Tree of Promise. Christmas proves that what God says will happen happens. God promised he would become one of us to save all of us. He did just that!

December 4 <sup>th</sup>	—	The Tree of Rebellion
<b>December 11<sup>th</sup></b>	—	<b>The Tree of Promise</b>
December 18 <sup>th</sup>	—	The Tree of Life

# Evening Prayer

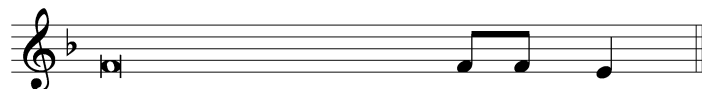
Stand

## Opening Sentences

CW 215



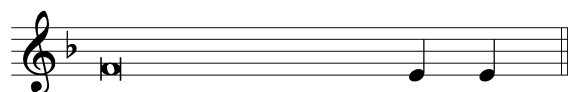
Jesus Christ is the light of the world,



**the light no darkness can o - ver - come.**



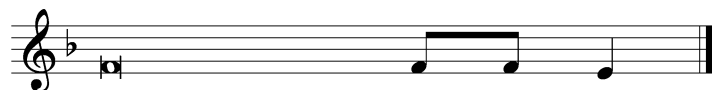
Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,



**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 SchackTune: © 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.**

<sup>1</sup>Surely God is good to Israel,  
to those who are pure in heart.

<sup>2</sup>But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;  
I had nearly lost my foothold.

<sup>3</sup>For I envied the arrogant  
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

<sup>4</sup>They have no struggles;  
their bodies are healthy and strong.

<sup>5</sup>They are free from common human burdens;  
they are not plagued by human ills.

<sup>6</sup>Therefore pride is their necklace;  
they clothe themselves with violence.

<sup>7</sup>From their callous hearts comes iniquity;  
their evil imaginations have no limits.

<sup>8</sup>They scoff, and speak with malice;  
with arrogance they threaten oppression.

<sup>9</sup>Their mouths lay claim to heaven,  
and their tongues take possession of the earth.

<sup>10</sup>Therefore their people turn to them  
and drink up waters in abundance.

<sup>11</sup>They say, "How would God know?  
Does the Most High know anything?"

<sup>12</sup>This is what the wicked are like—  
always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.

<sup>13</sup>Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure  
and have washed my hands in innocence.

<sup>14</sup>All day long I have been afflicted,  
and every morning brings new punishments.

<sup>15</sup>If I had spoken out like that,  
I would have betrayed your children.

<sup>16</sup>When I tried to understand all this,  
it troubled me deeply

<sup>17</sup>till I entered the sanctuary of God;  
then I understood their final destiny.

<sup>18</sup>Surely you place them on slippery ground;  
you cast them down to ruin.

<sup>19</sup>How suddenly are they destroyed,  
completely swept away by terrors!

<sup>20</sup>They are like a dream when one awakes;

when you arise, Lord,  
you will despise them as fantasies.

<sup>21</sup>When my heart was grieved  
and my spirit embittered,

<sup>22</sup>I was senseless and ignorant;  
I was a brute beast before you.

<sup>23</sup>Yet I am always with you;  
you hold me by my right hand.

<sup>24</sup>You guide me with your counsel,  
and afterward you will take me into glory.

<sup>25</sup>Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

<sup>26</sup>My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my heart  
and my portion forever.

<sup>27</sup>Those who are far from you will perish;  
you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

<sup>28</sup>But as for me, it is good to be near God.  
I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge;  
I will tell of all your deeds.

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.**

**343 Once in Royal David's City**

CW 343

<sup>1</sup>A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

<sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of might,  
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—

<sup>3</sup>and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

<sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he will judge the needy,  
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;  
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

<sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be his belt  
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

<sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;  
and a little child will lead them.

<sup>7</sup>The cow will feed with the bear,  
their young will lie down together,  
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

<sup>8</sup>The infant will play near the cobra's den,  
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

<sup>9</sup>They will neither harm nor destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

<sup>10</sup>In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

The Word of the Lord.

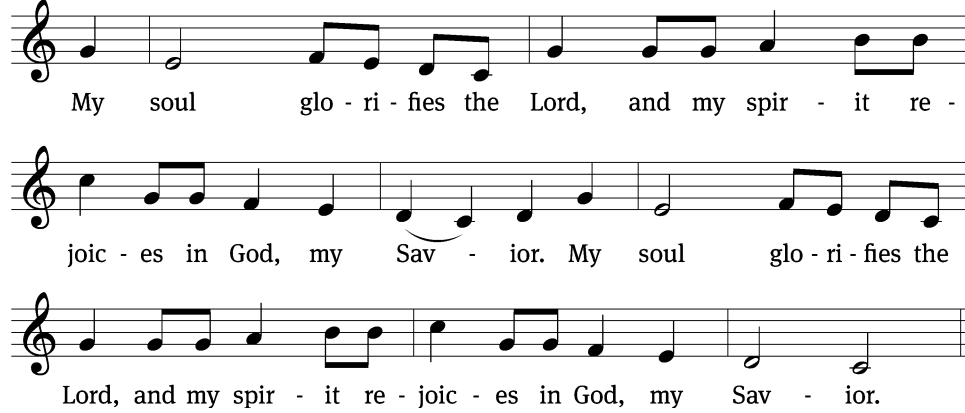
**Thanks be to God.**



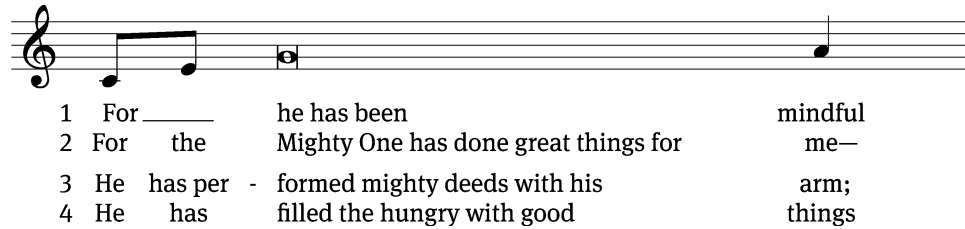
Song of Mary

CW 218

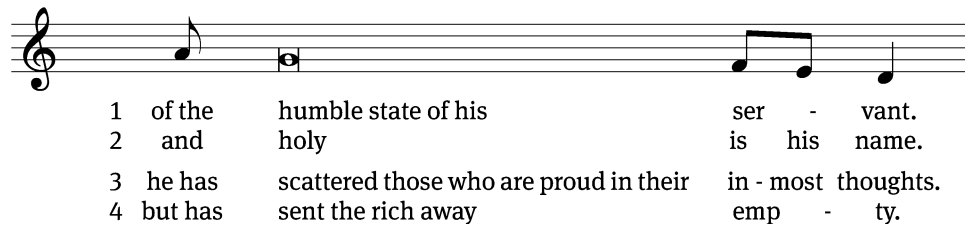
*Refrain*



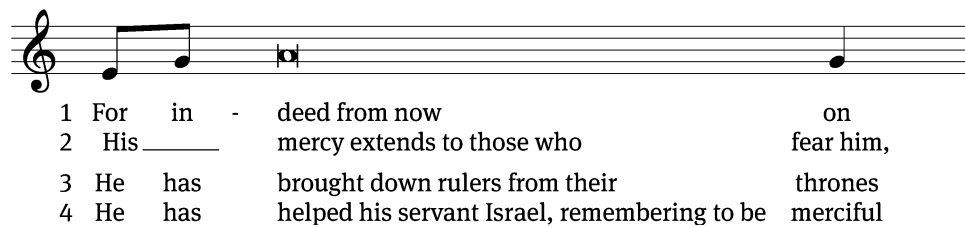
My soul glo - ri - fies the Lord, and my spir - it re -  
 joic - es in God, my Sav - ior. My soul glo - ri - fies the  
 Lord, and my spir - it re - joic - es in God, my Sav - ior.



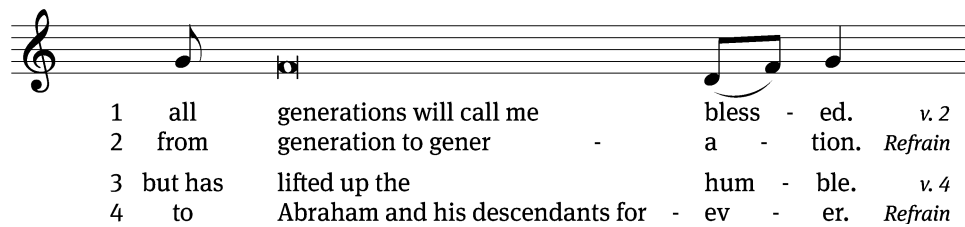
1 For \_\_\_\_\_ he has been mindful  
 2 For the Mighty One has done great things for me—  
 3 He has per - formed mighty deeds with his arm;  
 4 He has filled the hungry with good things



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*

## 784 Now the Light Has Gone Away

CW 784

## Acknowledgments

Evening Prayer from Christian Worship

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