



Christmas

TREES

A MIDWEEK ADVENT SERIES

The Tree of Promise
December 11, 2024

Welcome to Worship

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. We are happy you are here. Please fill out a Connect Card to let us know how we might continue to serve you.

Service Notes

In recent years there has been an explosion of companies that help you trace your family tree. You can go back a dozen generations, uncovering the history of your ancestors. Tracing your family tree allows you to learn more about where you came from. . . who you are. Interestingly, St. Matthew's Gospel begins by tracing Jesus' family tree. There are multiple reasons for this. First, providing the genealogy of Jesus proves that his is true man, exactly what we needed our Savior to be if 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! The Tree of Promise proves God shall keep every single promise he makes to us.



Those Serving in Worship

Pastor John Melke; Accompanist Destinee Fiecko

Acknowledgments

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Vespers

Hymn

311 Dawning Light of Our Salvation

Opening Sentences

CW 215

Jesus Christ is the light of the world,
the light no darkness can overcome.

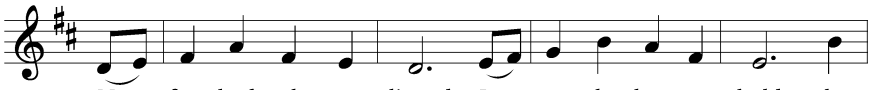
Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,
and the day is almost over.

Be our light and scatter the darkness,
and hear our evening prayer and praise.

73C My Feet Had Almost Slipped

Psalm 73C

With God and his promises as our strength, we preserve in faith through the challenges of life.



1 My feet had al - most slipped; I near - ly lost my hold when
2 My sanc - tu - ar - y sure, my por - tion and my rest, the
3 My flesh and heart may fail but God is still my strength; his



wick - ed lies were on the lips of ar - ro - gant and bold.
LORD re - mains my hope se - cure, the ref - uge of the blest.
prom - is - es will soon pre - vail and o - ver - come at length.



Their un - re - pent - ant mouths caused mis - er - y and fears un -
His pres - ence cheers my soul, his right hand holds me fast; he
Whom have I, LORD, but you? I turn my eyes from earth and



til I en - tered God's own house and wiped a - way my tears.
guides my path with his con - trol, takes me to heav'n at last.
seek those things which, good and true, a - lone have price - less worth.

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First Reading

1 Samuel 16:1–13

The Lord promised to make one of the sons of Jesse into a great king.

¹The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I see a king for myself among his sons.”

²Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”

The LORD said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’ ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will let you know what you are to do. You are to anoint for me the person that I point out to you.”

⁴So Samuel did what the LORD had told him to do and went to Bethlehem. Trembling with fear, the elders of the city came to meet him. They said, “Do you come in peace?”

⁵He said, “Yes, in peace. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.” He consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they had come, he looked at Eliab and said, “Certainly this is the LORD's anointed.”

⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at how tall he is, because I have rejected him. For the LORD does not look at things the way man does. For man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.”

⁹Then Jesse had Shammah pass by. But Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one either.”

¹⁰Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel. Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, “Is that all of the young men?”

Jesse said, “There still is the youngest, but he is tending the sheep.”

Samuel said to Jesse, “Send for him, for we cannot sit down to eat until he comes.”

¹²He sent for him and brought him in. David had red hair and striking eyes, and was good-looking. The LORD said, “Get up! Anoint him, because this is the one.”

¹³So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers. The Spirit of the LORD rushed on David with power from that day forward. After that Samuel set out and returned to Ramah. (EHV®)

Second Reading

Isaiah 11:1–10

The family tree of Jesse had been cut down to a stump. The Lord promised that family tree would grow again, producing a King much greater than David.

¹A shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse,
and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit.

²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him:
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³He will be delighted with the fear of the LORD.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
nor will he render decisions based on what he hears with his ears,
⁴but with righteousness he will judge the poor,
and he will render fair decisions in favor of the oppressed on the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath from his lips he will put the wicked to death.

⁵Righteousness will be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his hips.

⁶The wolf will dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat,
the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together,
and a little child will lead them.

⁷The cow and the bear will graze together,
and their young ones will lie down together.
The lion will eat straw like the cattle.

⁸The nursing child will play near a cobra's hole,
and the weaned child will put his hand into a viper's den.

⁹They will not hurt or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD,
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰This is what will take place on that day. The peoples will seek the Root of Jesse, who will be standing like a banner for the peoples, and his resting place will be glorious. (EHV®)

Gospel

Matthew 1:1–17

God had promised that the Savior would descend from both Abraham and David. In tracking Jesus' family tree, St. Matthew demonstrates that God keeps all his promises.

¹A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

²Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac was the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers. ³Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar. Perez was the father of Hezron. Hezron was the father of Ram. ⁴Ram was the father of Amminadab. Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was the father of Salmon. ⁵Salmon was the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab. Boaz was the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. Obed was the father of Jesse. ⁶Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been the wife of Uriah. ⁷Solomon was the father of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the father of Abijah. Abijah was the father of Asa. ⁸Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram. Joram was the father of Uzziah. ⁹Uzziah was the father of Jotham. Jotham was the father of Ahaz. Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah. ¹⁰Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh. Manasseh was the father of Amon. Amon was the father of Josiah. ¹¹Josiah was the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the Babylonian exile.

¹²After the Babylonian exile, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel. Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel. ¹³Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud. Abiud was the father of Eliakim. Eliakim was the father of Azor. ¹⁴Azor was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Achim. Achim was the father of Eliud. ¹⁵Eliud was the father of Eleazar. Eleazar was the father of Matthan. Matthan was the father of Jacob. ¹⁶Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, from whom Jesus was born (who is called Christ).

¹⁷So altogether there were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen generations from the Babylonian exile to Christ.

Hymn

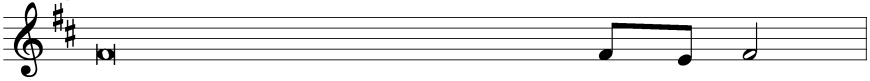
304 *What Hope! An Eden Prophesied*

Sermon

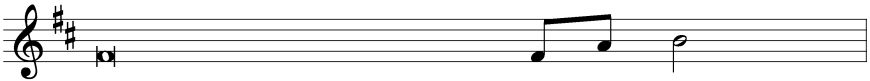
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Song of Zechariah

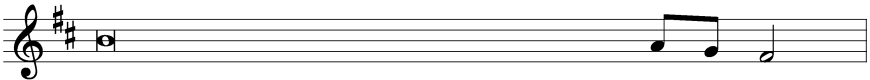
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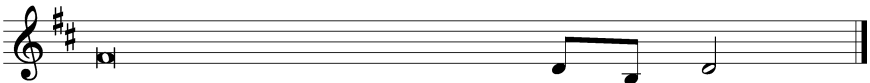
- 1 Praise be to the Lord, the God of Is - ra - el;
- 2 Through his holy prophets he promised of old
that he would save us from our en - e - mies,
- 3 This was the oath he swore to our father A - bra - ham:
- 4 You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most _____ High,
- 5 In the tender compassion of our God,



- 1 he has come to his people and set them free.
- 2 from the hands of all who hate _____ us.
- 3 to set us free from the hands of our en - e - mies,
- 4 for you will go before the Lord to pre - pare his way,
- 5 the dawn from on high shall break up - on _____ us,



- 1 He has raised up for us a mighty Sav - ior,
- 2 He promised to show mercy to our fa - thers
- 3 free to worship him with - out _____ fear,
- 4 to give his people knowledge of sal - va - tion
- 5 to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shad - ow of death



- 1 born of the house of his servant Da - vid.
- 2 and to remember his holy cov - e - nant.
- 3 holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.
- 4 by the forgiveness of their sins.
- 5 and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

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Be seated

Offering & Connect Card

Lord, Have Mercy

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

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 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.

Let us praise the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Blessing

The grace of our Lord T Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.

Hymn

528 Christ, the Word of God Incarnate (sts.1-3)