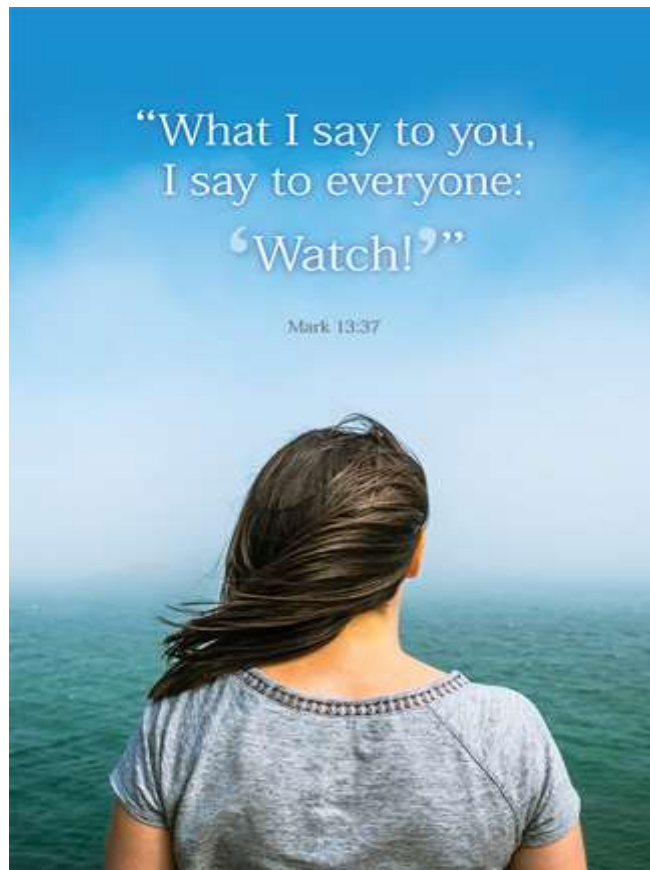




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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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NOVEMBER 29, 2020

St. Matthew's Danube, St. John's Renville, and St. Matthew Flora Twp. MN (WELS)

*St. Matthew Flora Twp. - St. Matthew's Danube - St. John's Renville (WELS)*

*www.stmatthewsdanube.org | Pastor Mike Kuschel | home: 320-826-2280 | cell: 320-522-2428*

*Little Lambs Learning Center: 100 Main St. Danube, MN | office: 320-826-2340*

**Prayer Before Worship:**

*Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Teach us to be ready! Protect us by your strength and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins. Amen.*

**Hymn: Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates - CW # 3**

*congregation sings stanza 1*

*pastor sings stanza 2*

**[1] Lift up your heads you mighty gates!**

***Behold the King of Glory waits.***

***The King of kings is drawing near;***

***The Savior of the world is here.***

***Life and salvation he will bring;***

***Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.***

***To God the Father raise***

***Your joyful songs of praise.***

**[2] *The King is born in poverty,***

***His chariot is humility,***

***His kingly crown is holiness,***

***His scepter, pity in distress.***

***The end of all our woe he brings;***

***Therefore the earth is glad and sings.***

***To Christ the Savior raise***

***Your grateful hymns of praise.***

**Composers & Copyrights:**

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***Tune: Johann A. Freylinghausen, 1670-1739***

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## SERVICE OF THE WORD – CW page 38

**M:** The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**M:** We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us 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.**

**M:** 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 of the Day**

**M:** Stir up your power, O 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**

## THE WORD

### FIRST LESSON

*Isaiah 63:16b,17; 64:1-8*

You, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name. <sup>17</sup>Why, O LORD, do you make us wander from your ways and harden our hearts so we do not revere you? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes that are your inheritance. Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! <sup>2</sup>As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! <sup>3</sup>For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. <sup>4</sup>Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him. <sup>5</sup>You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways. But when we continued to sin against them, you were angry. How then can we be saved? <sup>6</sup>All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. <sup>7</sup>No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins. <sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

**Verse of the Day: (spoken together)**

**Alleluia. He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. Alleluia. (Revelation 22:20)**

**SECOND LESSON**

*1 Corinthians 1:3-9*

<sup>3</sup>Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. <sup>5</sup>For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge— <sup>6</sup>because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. <sup>7</sup>Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. <sup>8</sup>He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES***

**ADVENT 1**

**M:** We light one Advent candle, remembering Jesus, who is coming again. He will come to gather his people from everywhere, both the living and the dead.

**C:** We remember Jesus, who will come at the end of time. None of us know what day that will be.

**M:** We hear his call to watch.

**C:** We light one Advent candle as a sign of our watchfulness and waiting.

**M:** Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

**C:** Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

*ONE ADVENT CANDLE IS LIT*

*Our worship continues with the reading of the Gospel*

## THE GOSPEL

*Mark 13:32-37*

<sup>32</sup>“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup> Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. <sup>34</sup>It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back— whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. <sup>36</sup>If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup>What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

*The Holy Bible : New International Version. 1996, c1984 . Zondervan: Grand Rapids*

M: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**C: Praise be to You, O Christ!**

**Hymn: Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates - CW # 3**

*All sing stanzas 3 & 4*

**[3] How blest the land, the city blest,  
Where Christ the ruler is confessed!  
O peaceful hearts and happy homes  
To whom this King in triumph comes!  
The cloudless sun of joy is he  
Who comes to set his people free.  
To God the Spirit raise  
Your happy shouts of praise.**

**[4] Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
Make it a temple set apart  
From earthly use for heav'n's employ,  
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.  
So shall your Sov'reign enter in  
And new and nobler life begin.  
To God alone be praise  
For word and deed and grace!**

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*Tune: Johann A. Freylinghausen, 1670-1739*

*Public Domain*

**Sermon:** Keep watch! We know what he has promised us!  
Stay vigilant and active! We know what he expects of us!

**Sermon Text:** *Mark 13:32-37*

## **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:**

*Please mail in your offering as we continue to support the work of spreading the gospel throughout our community and the world. Thank you for your continued support!*

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH - The First Sunday in Advent**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and God of all comfort, through your holy prophets you gave the promise of salvation and deliverance. Grant that as your servants of old looked with fervent longing for the coming of the Messiah, so may we eagerly and joyfully welcome your Son Jesus into our hearts through your Holy Spirit, and in this way be delivered by his might from the power of sin, death, and the devil.

Send out your Word to all corners of the earth, that people everywhere may know your love in the gift of your Son Jesus Christ and join the multitudes who eagerly await his coming again.

Come now to your Church, Savior of all nations, and grant all Christians a blessed new church year. Promote the honor of your Name, maintain sound doctrine among your people, and bless the ministry of your holy Word and Sacraments.

Look with favor upon all who are gathered in your house this day and sanctify them by your Word. To those among us who are afflicted in any way, to those who are in sorrow, to those who are enduring trials, to those who are in any necessity of body or spirit, grant them strength, comfort and patience by the awesome assurance of your abiding presence and unfailing love.

### ***Special prayers of thanksgiving or intercession may be spoken here***

All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who came for our deliverance, died for our salvation, rose again for our justification, and ever lives to pray for us before your Majesty on high. 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.

## THE BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.  
Live in harmony with one another.  
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

C: Amen

Hymn: Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates - CW #3  
All sing stanza 5

*[5] Redeemer, come! I open wide  
My heart to you; here, Lord, abide!  
Oh, enter with your saving grace;  
Show me your kind and friendly face.  
Your Holy Spirit guide us on  
Until our glorious goal is won.  
Eternal praise and fame  
We offer to your name.*

Composers & Copyrights:

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Tune: Johann A. Freylinghausen, 1670-1739

Public Domain

**Announcements** - *View our website and like us on Facebook for updated announcements.*

**Thank you for your continued support**

We thank you for your continued support of our efforts to share the good news of Jesus with our community and the world. Thank you for your mailing your offerings into the church the office.

***St. Matthew's Danube***  
***PO Box 67***  
***Danube, MN 56230***

***St. John's Renville***  
***209 Bryant Ave NE***  
***PO Box 416***  
***Renville, MN 56284***

***St. Matthew Flora Twp.***  
***PO Box 67***  
***Danube MN, 56230***

Please contact or write to us with any questions, concerns, words of encouragement or prayer requests. God be with you, and God willing we will be able to meet together in God's house soon. If you are in need of pastoral care and would like to have a visit over the phone please contact me. You can reach me either through my home number 826-2280 or cell phone 320-522-2428.

**Stay Connected Wherever You Are:** We would like to encourage all those who are unable to come to worship, or unsure if they ought to come, to continue to make use of local radio, television, and online ministries. Below is a listing of different ministries available on different forms of media. ***Television:*** *Time of Grace* at 10:30am on Kare 11 on Sunday

***Radio:*** St. John's of Redwood Falls on 97.7 KLGR FM @ 8:00am Sunday mornings

Lutheran Chapel Services on KNUJ 97.3 FM or 860 AM @ 7:45 am Sundays

***Online:*** Join us for worship online in one of several ways: visit ***stmatthewsdanube.org*** or Search for St. Matthews Danube on YouTube for recorded services and livestreaming or follow us on Facebook. ***Other online resources that offer a variety of tools to enrich your daily devotional life.*** *wels.net timeofgrace.org nph.net forwardinchrist.net*

**New Worship Service Precautions:** Due to increased health concerns in our area we will ***not meet*** for worship ***at St. Matthew Flora Twp or St. John's Renville this Sunday.*** At ***St. Matthew's Danube*** we ***will meet*** for worship according to our protocols that we have put in place. During this time we will be taking some extra steps to clean and sanitize our churches. As we monitor the situation in our congregations and in our area, will be reassessing our worship schedule from week to week. We will do our best to keep you up to date. Look for updates on our website and our Facebook page as we navigate the next few weeks, with the Lord's help. We would like to encourage you to carefully consider what is best in your particular situation. If you choose to stay home, please make use of the online services or stay connected to Christ and his Word by using the other resources shared above. If you choose to join us for worship at St. Matthew's please pay careful attention to the safety protocols that have been put in place.

Remember to wash your hands, wear a mask for the entire service, watch your distance, and please stay home if you are not feeling well. Monitor closely any symptoms you might have. Don't forget that you can contact your pastor if you are in need of additional support and counsel. Above all, trust in the Lord and call on his name for he has graciously placed his name on you. ***The LORD bless you and keep you, the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the LORD look on you with favor and give you his peace.***

**Sunday School:** St. John's in Renville and St. Matthew's in Danube will be directing parents to online learning resources. Check out our Facebook page for more information. Please email [beth.kuschel@gmail.com](mailto:beth.kuschel@gmail.com) for more information about the remote learning resources or with any question about the lesson. Pastor is assisting Faye Schmidt and Cindy Hebrink, in putting together a Christmas Program as we are able. If you would like more information about this or would like to offer some assistance or support please contact Pastor Kuschel. May God bless these efforts to share the word of God in a variety of forms as we bring up the next generation in the training and instruction of the Lord. ***St. John's Renville (contact Faye Schmidt 320-979-6663) St. Matthew's Danube (contact Beth Kuschel 320-522-2428)*** Follow the link for materials for children of all ages (teacher's guides also available) <https://online.nph.net/cl-ss-downloads>

**Advent Devotional Booklets from Martin Luther College:** *The Jesse Tree* is MLC's newest Advent devotion book, our gift to you this Christmas. Similar to an Advent calendar, the booklet contains 25 devotions accompanied by 25 ornaments you can hang on your Christmas tree or on a "Jesse tree" of your own making. The ornaments have been designed by WELS artist Peter Schaeve, and they'll be available in full color and in black-line images ready to be colored by you or your children. We hope you enjoy this new booklet that retells the Old Testament stories leading to the birth of our Savior, Jesus, who was a descendant of King David and David's father, Jesse: "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit." Copies are available in the back of church or follow the link: <https://mlc-wels.edu/publications/the-jesse-tree/>

**Lighting of the Advent Candles:** In anticipation for the coming of Christ we light the candles of the advent wreath. We will use responsive readings each Sunday before pastor lights the candle. Today we light the first candle the prophecy candle or candle of hope.

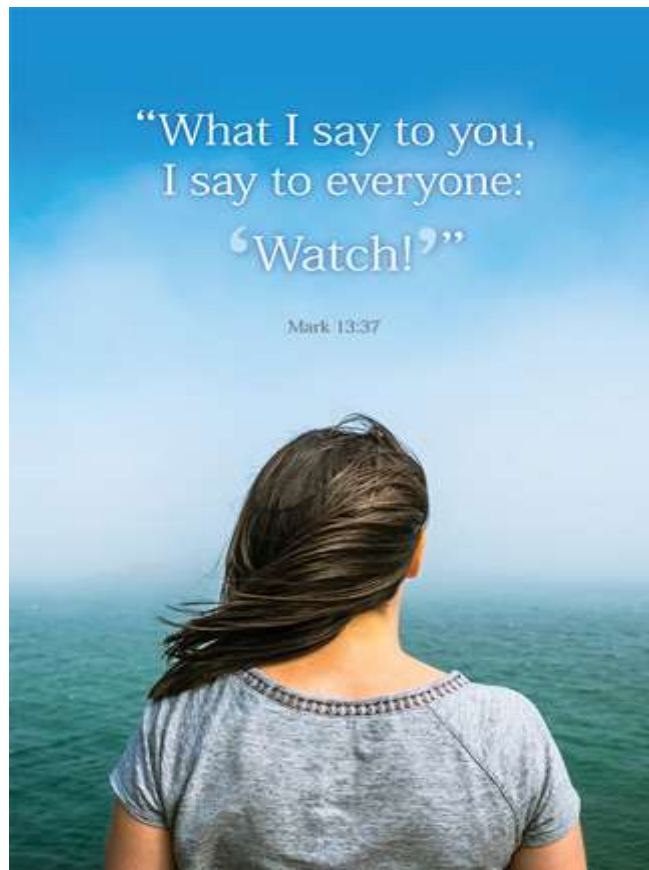




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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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**Prayer Before Worship:**

*Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Teach us to be ready! Protect us by your strength and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins. Amen.*

**Hymn: Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates - CW # 3**

*congregation sings stanza 1*

*pastor sings stanza 2*

**[1] Lift up your heads you mighty gates!**

***Behold the King of Glory waits.***

***The King of kings is drawing near;***

***The Savior of the world is here.***

***Life and salvation he will bring;***

***Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.***

***To God the Father raise***

***Your joyful songs of praise.***

**[2] *The King is born in poverty,***

***His chariot is humility,***

***His kingly crown is holiness,***

***His scepter, pity in distress.***

***The end of all our woe he brings;***

***Therefore the earth is glad and sings.***

***To Christ the Savior raise***

***Your grateful hymns of praise.***

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## SERVICE OF THE WORD – CW page 38

**M:** The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**M:** We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

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**M:** 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 of the Day**

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## THE WORD

### FIRST LESSON

*Isaiah 63:16b,17; 64:1-8*

You, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name. <sup>17</sup>Why, O LORD, do you make us wander from your ways and harden our hearts so we do not revere you? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes that are your inheritance. Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! <sup>2</sup>As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! <sup>3</sup>For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. <sup>4</sup>Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him. <sup>5</sup>You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways. But when we continued to sin against them, you were angry. How then can we be saved? <sup>6</sup>All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. <sup>7</sup>No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins. <sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

**Verse of the Day: (spoken together)**

**Alleluia. He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. Alleluia. (Revelation 22:20)**

**SECOND LESSON**

*1 Corinthians 1:3-9*

<sup>3</sup>Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. <sup>5</sup>For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge— <sup>6</sup>because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. <sup>7</sup>Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. <sup>8</sup>He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES***

**ADVENT 1**

**M:** We light one Advent candle, remembering Jesus, who is coming again. He will come to gather his people from everywhere, both the living and the dead.

**C:** We remember Jesus, who will come at the end of time. None of us know what day that will be.

**M:** We hear his call to watch.

**C:** We light one Advent candle as a sign of our watchfulness and waiting.

**M:** Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

**C:** Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

*ONE ADVENT CANDLE IS LIT*

*Our worship continues with the reading of the Gospel*

## THE GOSPEL

*Mark 13:32-37*

<sup>32</sup>“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup> Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. <sup>34</sup>It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back— whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. <sup>36</sup>If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup>What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

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M: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**C: Praise be to You, O Christ!**

**Hymn: Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates - CW # 3**

*All sing stanzas 3 & 4*

**[3] How blest the land, the city blest,  
Where Christ the ruler is confessed!  
O peaceful hearts and happy homes  
To whom this King in triumph comes!  
The cloudless sun of joy is he  
Who comes to set his people free.  
To God the Spirit raise  
Your happy shouts of praise.**

**[4] Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
Make it a temple set apart  
From earthly use for heav'n's employ,  
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.  
So shall your Sov'reign enter in  
And new and nobler life begin.  
To God alone be praise  
For word and deed and grace!**

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**Sermon:** Keep watch! We know what he has promised us!  
Stay vigilant and active! We know what he expects of us!

**Sermon Text:** *Mark 13:32-37*

## **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:**

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## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH - The First Sunday in Advent**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and God of all comfort, through your holy prophets you gave the promise of salvation and deliverance. Grant that as your servants of old looked with fervent longing for the coming of the Messiah, so may we eagerly and joyfully welcome your Son Jesus into our hearts through your Holy Spirit, and in this way be delivered by his might from the power of sin, death, and the devil.

Send out your Word to all corners of the earth, that people everywhere may know your love in the gift of your Son Jesus Christ and join the multitudes who eagerly await his coming again.

Come now to your Church, Savior of all nations, and grant all Christians a blessed new church year. Promote the honor of your Name, maintain sound doctrine among your people, and bless the ministry of your holy Word and Sacraments.

Look with favor upon all who are gathered in your house this day and sanctify them by your Word. To those among us who are afflicted in any way, to those who are in sorrow, to those who are enduring trials, to those who are in any necessity of body or spirit, grant them strength, comfort and patience by the awesome assurance of your abiding presence and unfailing love.

### ***Special prayers of thanksgiving or intercession may be spoken here***

All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who came for our deliverance, died for our salvation, rose again for our justification, and ever lives to pray for us before your Majesty on high. 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.**

## THE BLESSING

**M:** Brothers and sisters, go in peace.  
Live in harmony with one another.  
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

**C: Amen**

**Hymn: Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates - CW #3  
All sing stanza 5**

***[5] Redeemer, come! I open wide  
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Oh, enter with your saving grace;  
Show me your kind and friendly face.  
Your Holy Spirit guide us on  
Until our glorious goal is won.  
Eternal praise and fame  
We offer to your name.***

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***Danube MN, 56230***

Please contact or write to us with any questions, concerns, words of encouragement or prayer requests. God be with you, and God willing we will be able to meet together in God's house soon. If you are in need of pastoral care and would like to have a visit over the phone please contact me. You can reach me either through my home number 826-2280 or cell phone 320-522-2428.

**Stay Connected Wherever You Are:** We would like to encourage all those who are unable to come to worship, or unsure if they ought to come, to continue to make use of local radio, television, and online ministries. Below is a listing of different ministries available on different forms of media. ***Television:*** *Time of Grace* at 10:30am on Kare 11 on Sunday

***Radio:*** St. John's of Redwood Falls on 97.7 KLGR FM @ 8:00am Sunday mornings

Lutheran Chapel Services on KNUJ 97.3 FM or 860 AM @ 7:45 am Sundays

***Online:*** Join us for worship online in one of several ways: visit ***stmatthewsdanube.org*** or Search for St. Matthews Danube on YouTube for recorded services and livestreaming or follow us on Facebook. ***Other online resources that offer a variety of tools to enrich your daily devotional life.*** *wels.net timeofgrace.org nph.net forwardinchrist.net*

**New Worship Service Precautions:** Due to increased health concerns in our area we will ***not meet*** for worship ***at St. Matthew Flora Twp or St. John's Renville this Sunday.*** At ***St. Matthew's Danube*** we ***will meet*** for worship according to our protocols that we have put in place. During this time we will be taking some extra steps to clean and sanitize our churches. As we monitor the situation in our congregations and in our area, will be reassessing our worship schedule from week to week. We will do our best to keep you up to date. Look for updates on our website and our Facebook page as we navigate the next few weeks, with the Lord's help. We would like to encourage you to carefully consider what is best in your particular situation. If you choose to stay home, please make use of the online services or stay connected to Christ and his Word by using the other resources shared above. If you choose to join us for worship at St. Matthew's please pay careful attention to the safety protocols that have been put in place.

Remember to wash your hands, wear a mask for the entire service, watch your distance, and please stay home if you are not feeling well. Monitor closely any symptoms you might have. Don't forget that you can contact your pastor if you are in need of additional support and counsel. Above all, trust in the Lord and call on his name for he has graciously placed his name on you. ***The LORD bless you and keep you, the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the LORD look on you with favor and give you his peace.***

**Sunday School:** St. John's in Renville and St. Matthew's in Danube will be directing parents to online learning resources. Check out our Facebook page for more information. Please email [beth.kuschel@gmail.com](mailto:beth.kuschel@gmail.com) for more information about the remote learning resources or with any question about the lesson. Pastor is assisting Faye Schmidt and Cindy Hebrink, in putting together a Christmas Program as we are able. If you would like more information about this or would like to offer some assistance or support please contact Pastor Kuschel. May God bless these efforts to share the word of God in a variety of forms as we bring up the next generation in the training and instruction of the Lord. ***St. John's Renville (contact Faye Schmidt 320-979-6663) St. Matthew's Danube (contact Beth Kuschel 320-522-2428)*** Follow the link for materials for children of all ages (teacher's guides also available) <https://online.nph.net/cl-ss-downloads>

**Advent Devotional Booklets from Martin Luther College:** *The Jesse Tree* is MLC's newest Advent devotion book, our gift to you this Christmas. Similar to an Advent calendar, the booklet contains 25 devotions accompanied by 25 ornaments you can hang on your Christmas tree or on a "Jesse tree" of your own making. The ornaments have been designed by WELS artist Peter Schaeve, and they'll be available in full color and in black-line images ready to be colored by you or your children. We hope you enjoy this new booklet that retells the Old Testament stories leading to the birth of our Savior, Jesus, who was a descendant of King David and David's father, Jesse: "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit." Copies are available in the back of church or follow the link: <https://mlc-wels.edu/publications/the-jesse-tree/>

**Lighting of the Advent Candles:** In anticipation for the coming of Christ we light the candles of the advent wreath. We will use responsive readings each Sunday before pastor lights the candle. Today we light the first candle the prophecy candle or candle of hope.