



COMFORT,
COMFORT
MY PEOPLE,
SAYS YOUR
GOD.

ISAIAH 40:1, ESV

Immanuel Lutheran Church & School

1449 34th Street NW, Winter Haven, FL 33881

www.WinterHavenLutheran.com

Rob Sauers, Pastor (920) 602-3242

Neil Bernthal, Teacher (863) 967-5145

Katie Naumann, Teacher (253) 230-4184

Organist: Teresa Bernthal

Usher: Rudy Enriquez

Acolyte: Seth Bernthal

As We Gather

In ancient days, God spoke through the prophet Isaiah to comfort His people with the assurance of pardon and a joyful return to their home. After the time of exile, He Himself would restore them, renew them, and return them to the land He had promised them on oath to their forefathers. As He was with His ancient followers, so He is with us. Our God is for us, not against us! In the mercy of our advent King, Jesus Christ, who came once and who will surely come again, we rejoice in His goodness and gather to receive all that He seeks to give.

✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

Hymn

701 – Prepare the Royal Highway

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 27:13-14; 130:5

P I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living.

C **Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!**

P I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,

C **And in His word I do hope.**

Confession and Absolution

Based on Psalm 130

P With hope in the Lord's promises of renewal by His Word and Spirit, let us together confess our sins to Him.

C **Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;**

P Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive To the voice of my supplications.

C **If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, I would have no hope.**

P But there is forgiveness with You, therefore we place our trust in You.

C **Restore us, LORD God, and set us free from our sins.**

- P** Renew us in Your hope, that we may wait for Your salvation.
- C** **Because of Your mercy for us in Christ, redeem us from all our iniquities. Amen.**
- P** As we wait for Jesus' final coming, we place our hope and our confidence in the promises of His Word and find our home in the presence of His Spirit. Confessing our sins and turning away from them through lives of repentance, we are assured again this day of the Lord's steadfast love and plentiful redemption for us. As a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

✠ The Service of the Word ✠

Introit

Psalm 80:1, 8a, 9b, 7

- P** Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock;
- C** **You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!**
- P** You have brought a vine out of Egypt;
- C** **You caused it to take deep root, And it filled the land.**
- P** Restore us, O God of hosts;
- C** **Cause Your face to shine, And we shall be saved!**

Glory be to the Father

Gloria Patri

Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son
 and to the Ho - ly Ghost; As it was in the be - ginning,
 is now, and ev - er shall be for - ev - er more. A - men.

Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

The musical notation is written on two staves in G major (one sharp). The melody is simple and homophonic, with lyrics placed below the notes. The first staff contains the first two phrases, and the second staff contains the final phrase.

Glory to God in the Highest

Gloria in Excelsis – 238 (1)

All glory be to God a - lone, For - ev-er more the Highest One,
Who doth our sin-ful race be - friend And grace and peace to
us ex-tend. A-mong man - kind may His good will All
hearts with deep thanks - giv - ing fill.

The musical notation is written on four staves in G major. The melody is more complex than the first piece, featuring some eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Epistle Reading

2 Peter 3:8-14

⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 85

- P** LORD, You have been favorable to Your land;
- C** You have brought back the captivity of Jacob.
- P** You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people;
- C** You have covered all their sin.
- P** You have taken away all Your wrath;
- C** You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger.
- P** Restore us, O God of our salvation,
- C** And cause Your anger toward us to cease.
- P** Will You be angry with us forever?
- C** Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?
- P** Will You not revive us again,
- C** That Your people may rejoice in You?
- P** Show us Your mercy, LORD,
- C** And grant us Your salvation.
- P** I will hear what God the LORD will speak, For He will speak peace To His people and to His saints;
- C** But let them not turn back to folly.
- P** Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,
- C** That glory may dwell in our land.
- P** Mercy and truth have met together;
- C** Righteousness and peace have kissed.
- P** Truth shall spring out of the earth,
- C** And righteousness shall look down from heaven.

- P** Yes, the LORD will give what is good;
- C** And our land will yield its increase.
- P** Righteousness will go before Him,
- C** And shall make His footsteps our pathway.

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:1-8

¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.” ³ “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.’” ⁴ John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. ⁵ Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, “There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. ⁸ I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Alleluia

- P** Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.



Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia!

Confession of Faith

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.

Hymn

60 – Hark, a Thrilling Voice is Sounding

¹ “Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. ² “Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the LORD’s hand Double for all her sins.” ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; ⁵ The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” ⁶ The voice said, “Cry out!” And he said, “What shall I cry?” “All flesh is grass, And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.” ⁹ O Zion, You who bring good tidings, Get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, You who bring good tidings, Lift up your voice with strength, Lift it up, be not afraid; Say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!” ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him. ¹¹ He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.



Sermon

Comfort for Life in the Wilderness



**"COMFORT,
O COMFORT
MY PEOPLE,"
SAYS YOUR GOD.**

ISAIAH 40:1, NASB

Offertory



Create in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from Your
pres-ence, and take not Your Ho-ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un-to me the joy of Your sal - va - tion; and up -
hold me with Your free spir-it. A - men.

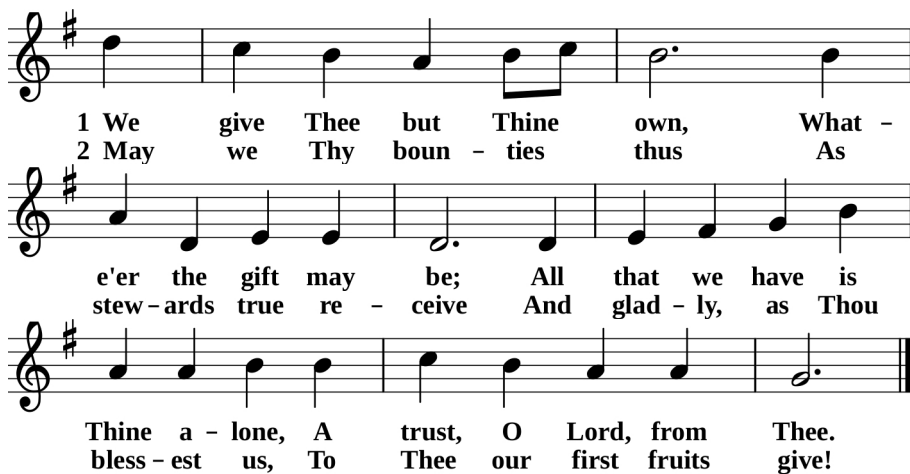
Hymn

61 - Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People

Offering

Offering Hymn

441 (1-2)



1 We give Thee but Thine own, What -
2 May we Thy boun - ties thus As
e'er the gift may be; All that we have is
stew - ards true re - ceive And glad - ly, as Thou
Thine a - lone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.
bless - est us, To Thee our first fruits give!

General Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

C 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.

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
- C** Amen.

Hymn

66 – Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

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✠ Announcements ✠

Upcoming Schedule

December 10	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)
December 13	2:00 pm	Midweek Advent Worship Service
December 17	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service
	11:30 am	Board of Trustees/Church Council
December 20	7:00 pm	Children's Christmas Eve Worship Service
December 24	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service
December 25	10:15 am	Christmas Day Worship Service

Upcoming Meetings: The following is our schedule of meetings through the annual meeting in January:

- **December 17** – Board of Trustees/Church Council
- **January 7** – Annual Voters' Meeting

Fellowship Meal: We will have a holiday fellowship meal (potluck) following the worship service on December 3. Please plan to stick around after the service and bring a dish to pass.

Midweek Advent Worship: This year's midweek Advent series is entitled *Resounding Psalms for Advent*. We do not often emphasize the psalms during the Advent season, instead being eager to read about the prophecies, anticipating Jesus' coming. Yet the psalms are God's Word during terrible times to people who lived before God's promises were fulfilled in our Savior's coming. This Advent, we focus on several psalms as we use them to prepare to celebrate our Lord's birth with open eyes and ears. Here is our worship schedule:

- December 13 @ 2:00 pm – Revived (Psalm 85)
- December 25 @ 10:15 am – Rejoice (Psalm 98)

These services will be streamed live/recorded on our website for those who are unable to attend in person.

Nominations for ILC Professor and ILC President: The Board of Regents announces the following nominations to fill the professorship vacated by the impending retirement of Professor Mark Kranz at the end of the 2023-24 academic year: Neil Bernthal, Jeff Karnitz, Joshua Ohlmann, Dan Roehl, Seth Schaller, Steve Sydow, Matthew Thurow, Paul Tiefel III, and Matthew Ude. In addition, the following and only person has been nominated for the office of President of Immanuel Lutheran College: Daniel Schierenbeck. The term of the ILC President's call is for two years, extending to the end of Academic Year 2026. All comments from members of CLC congregations regarding these candidates are to be received by email or letter no later than midnight January 2, 2024 (letters postmarked December 23, 2023) to: Mr. James Burkhardt; 217 Windy Lane; Rockwall, TX 75087; email: jeb6217@yahoo.com.

2024 CLC Mission Helper Trip: Applications are being accepted for the 2024 Mission Helper Trip to Africa. Find more information and apply online: www.mht.lutheranmissions.org

CLC Call News: Pastor Michael Wilke of Gethsemane Lutheran of Saginaw, MI, is still considering the calls from Calvary Lutheran of Marquette, MI and St. Peter's Lutheran of Iron River, MI. <> Pastor David Pfeiffer of Holy Trinity Lutheran in West Columbia, SC is still considering a

call from Immanuel Lutheran in Mankato, MN. <> Michaela Winters, lower grade teacher at Messiah Lutheran in Hales Corners, WI is resigning at the conclusion of the current school year to spend more time with her infant daughter.

Fruits of Faith	December 3, 2023	WH: 46
Immanuel Home		\$3,314.25
Missions		\$50.00
Total		\$3,364.25

✠ Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions ✠

December 11 - December 16

Monday: Luke 17:20-30 – The Pharisees (v20), who assumed they were in the kingdom of God, did not even recognize God’s ruler in their midst. His disciples (v22) knew Him and would one day long to see Him come again, which will happen suddenly at just the right time.

Tuesday: 1 Timothy 6:11-16 – Unlike the false prophet who thinks godliness is a means to gain material things, the man of God is encouraged to pursue all that reflects the Savior who is coming again.

Wednesday: Malachi 4:1-6 – In the closing verses of his book, Malachi contrasts the wicked and the faithful in the day of the Lord’s coming. One is trampled by the Lord’s power, the other leaping for joy.

Thursday: Romans 15:4-13 – Paul encourages patient endurance and receiving fellow-believers as the God of hope fills us with complete joy, peace, and hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Friday: Hebrews 10:35-39 – The writer to the Hebrews also encourages Christians to patient endurance, continuing in the faith while waiting for the sure promises of God in Christ.

Saturday: James 5:7-10 – As the prophets of old waited patiently for the end of suffering (v10) and the fulfillment of God’s promises, so believers today need patience, also with one another (v9), while waiting for the coming of the Lord.

