December 20, 2026

First Reading

A reading from 2 Samuel

1 Now when the king was settled in his house and the LORD had
given him rest from all his enemies around him, 2 the king said to
the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but
the ark of God stays in a tent.” 3 Nathan said to the king, “Go, do
all that you have in mind, for the LORD is with you.”
4 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan,
5 “Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the
one to build me a house to live in? 6 I have not lived in a house
since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this
day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.
7 Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did
I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I
commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you
not built me a house of cedar?’ 8 Now therefore thus you shall say
to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from
the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people
Israel, 9 and I have been with you wherever you went and have
cut off all your enemies from before you, and I will make for you a
great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10 And I
will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so
that they may live in their own place and be disturbed no more,
and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, 11 from the
time that I appointed judges over my people Israel, and I will give
you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to
you that the LORD will make you a house. 16 Your house and your
kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall
be established forever.”

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

December 20, 2026

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Use this blessing when lighting all four candles.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.

In your Son, Emmanuel,
you have shown us your light
and saved us from the power of sin.

Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.

Increase our longing for your presence,
that at the celebration of your Son's birth
his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst,
for he is our light and our salvation.

Blessed be God forever.

Amen.