

God's Service Sunday, December 15, 2024

Third Sunday of Advent

ELW Holy Communion Setting Ten



WELCOME

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent. Let us take a moment to witness the joy of Christ's presence here, within his church, and in the world through our participation in larger church organizations such as Lutheran World Relief.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Disabled father becomes nutrition champion for South /Sudanese IDPs

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE "Let All Mortal Flesh" arr. by Hall

GREETING (ELW p. 203)

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

And also with you.

ADVENT WREATH

Children are welcome to gather around the Advent wreath to assist the usher in it's lighting as we sing our gathering song.

GATHERING SONG AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

- 1 Light the Advent candle, one:
Now the waiting has begun;
we have started on our way,
time to think of Christmas day.

Refrain

Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.

- 2 Light the Advent candle, two:
Think of humble shepherds, who

filled with wonder at the sight
of the child of Christmas night.

- 3 Light the Advent candle, three:
Think of heavenly harmony;
angels singing ""Peace on earth"
at the blessed Savior's birth.

©2001, Mary Lu Walker All rights reserved. Used by permission. ONE LICENSE: #734503-A valid 4/17/2024-4/16/2025

KYRIE (ELW p. 203)

**Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.
We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.
Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.
Have mercy on us, Lord, make sin and shame depart.
Renew us with your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

PUPPET SHOW AND CHILDREN'S CHORALE

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

A reading from Zephaniah.

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;

you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst,

a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,

he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing

¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,

so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors

at that time.

And I will save the lame

and gather the outcast,

and I will change their shame into praise

and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,

at the time when I gather you;

for I will make you renowned and praised

among all the peoples of the earth,

when I restore your fortunes

before your eyes, says the LORD.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not¹ be afraid,

for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become¹ my salvation.

³ **With joy you¹ will draw water**

from the wells¹ of salvation. R

⁴ And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call¹ on God's name;

make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name¹ is exalted.

⁵ **Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done¹ gloriously;**

let this be known in¹ all the earth.

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O¹ royal Zion,

for great in your midst is the Holy¹ One of Israel. **R**

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

A reading from Philipians.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 205)

Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.

Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.

Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” (ELW 244)

- 1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing,
and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising
and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
at midnight comes the cry.

- 2 The watchers on the mountain
proclaim the bridegroom near;
go forth as he approaches
with alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting;
the gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory;
the bridegroom is at hand.

- 3 The saints, who here in patience
their cross and suff'rings bore,
shall live and reign forever
when sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory
the Lamb they shall behold;
in triumph cast before him
their diadems of gold.

- 4 Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for,
o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted,
we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption
that sets your people free!

Text & Music: Public Domain

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick. *We pray especially for Shirley, Anna, Kay, Carolyn, Cheryl, Gene, Darla, Jim, and these we name now in our hearts and with our voices...*(pause for names to be spoken) Show your compassion and remember your people in love. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

PEACE (ELW p. 206)

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

SHARING GOD'S ABUNDANCE

On Gaudete Sunday or Rejoice Sunday we pause amidst the darkness that shrouds our world, we light our candles and with rose as the color of the day, we celebrate the beauty, sweetness and nearness of the birth of Jesus the Christ. We wait in faith, having witnessed the love and generosity of our God knowing God did not withhold even his own self that we might live the

abundant life God created for us. Today with joy we steward God's great abundance that all may be bathed in his coming light and nourished to live that abundant life.

If you have offering to share please raise your hand so the ushers may collect it. You may also give online anytime at landerlutherans.com.

OFFERING MUSIC “Comfort Ye” arr. by Lasky

SETTING OF THE TABLE “Come Now, O Prince of Peace” (ELW 247)

- 1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body.
 Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

- 2 Come now, O God of love, make us one body.
 Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

- 3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior.
 Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.

- 4 Come, Hope of unity, make us one body.
 Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.

Text and music © Geonyong Lee Used by permission. ONE LICENSE: #734503-A valid 4/17/2023-4/16/2024

OFFERING PRAYER

Creator God,
you made the whole world,
even the farthest stars,
and you draw near to feed us.
We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food
that we may live in expectation
for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE (ELW p. 206)

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE (ELW p. 207)

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 207)

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
hosanna in the highest.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,
our Salvation and our Hope,
we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.
When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,
you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.
At this end of the ages
your Son Jesus came to bring us your love
and to heal all the suffering world.
In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
his life, death, and resurrection,
we await his coming again
in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us
and on this bread and wine we share:
strengthen our faith,
increase our hope,
and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 208)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Receive who you are; Become what you receive. Come to this table, you who are strong in faith and you who seek building up. You who have been to this sacrament often, and you who have not been for some time. You who have tried to follow Jesus and you who have failed. Come. It is Christ who bids us to meet him here where God feeds us with tender mercy and there is a place already set just for you at his table. Come and be fed.

COMMUNION (ELW p. 208)

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 208)

**O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
you suffered death our lives to save: have mercy now, we pray.
O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mercy now, we pray.
O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
eternal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.**

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC “Wachet Auf” by J. S. Bach

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (ELW p. 208)

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

SENDING OF COMMUNION

Gracious God, whose mercy endures from generation to generation: As Mary set out to visit Elizabeth before she gave birth to her son, bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with our sisters and brothers who are *sick/homebound/imprisoned*. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this communion, that through the body and blood of your Son we may all know the hope of your promised coming in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our hope for the journey,
✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (ELW 254)

- 1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart.
- 2 Born thy people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king;
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Text & Music: Public Domain

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

Thanks be to God.

Upcoming Commemorations

Las Posadas (LLC)

Monday, December 16, 2024

This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the "posadas," or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552

Friday, December 20, 2024

Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.

GATHERING SONG AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH ©2001, Mary Lu Walker All rights reserved. Used by permission. ONE LICENSE: #734503-A valid 4/17/2024-4/16/2025 HYMN OF THE DAY “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” (ELW 244) Text & Music: Public Domain SETTING OF THE TABLE “Come Now, O Prince of Peace” (ELW 247) Text and music © Geonyong Lee Used by permission. ONE LICENSE: #734503-A valid 4/17/2023-4/16/2024 SENDING SONG “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (ELW 254) Text & Music: Public Domain From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2024 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.