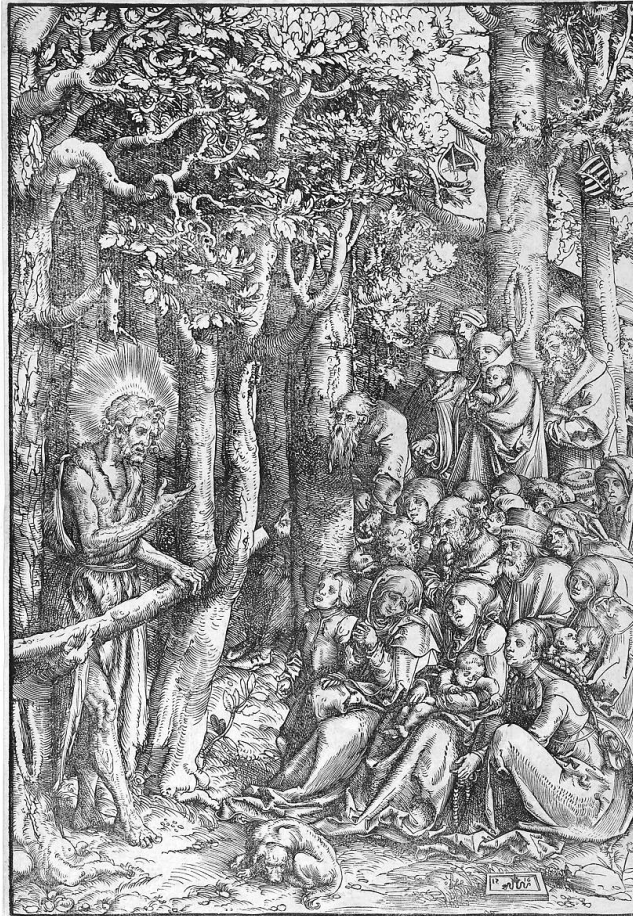


THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 17th, 2023



MARTIN LUTHER
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. Louis, MO

Pastor Seth Georgson

314-914-6457

THE COMMON SERVICE

Gathering Rite

Sing the refrain the first time and then sing it as indicated.

Lead us to your light, lead us out of dark-ness.

Lead us to your light. Come, Je - sus, come.

Lord, we await your coming to our world;
Bring us the gift of salvation. **Refrain**

Lord, you are hope and healing for our world;
Come, now, and bring us your good news. **Refrain**

Come, O come, O Come, Emmanuel;
Come with us on earth here to dwell. **Refrain**

Rouse us from sleep, wake us from our slumber;
Banish the darkness of night. **Refrain**

Child of the light and love beyond all telling,
Fill our hearts with wonder and praise. **Stand for the final Refrain**

Invocation

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: A - men.


Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie

M: The redeemed will rejoice at the coming of the Lord. It is good for us to be watchful and ready for his return.

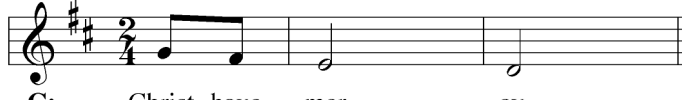
Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into the peace of God's kingdom. Lord, have mercy.

(echoing the minister)



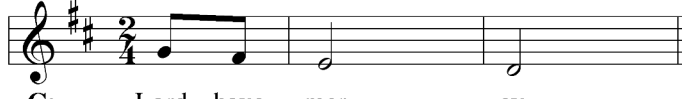
C: Lord, have mer - cy.

M: You come in Word and Sacrament to strengthen us in holiness. Christ, have mercy.



C: Christ, have mer - cy.

M: You will come in glory with salvation for your people. Lord, have mercy.



C: Lord, have mer - cy.

M: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.



C: A - men.

Absolution

M: The almighty God has been merciful to us and has sent his Son to die for all. For his sake, he forgives us our sins and calls us from darkness to his marvelous light. Therefore, 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.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Glory be to God

Gloria in Excelsis



C: Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor-ship you, we glorify you,



we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther al - mighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the



sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the
 sin of the world; re - ceive our prayer. You sit at the right hand of
 God the Father; have mercy on us. For you on - ly are holy;
 you on - ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Spirit,
 are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

Prayer of the Day

M: The Lord be with you.



C: And al - so with you.

M: Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

Be seated.

THE WORD

First Lesson ----- Isaiah 61:1-3,10,11

The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the afflicted.
He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release for those who are bound,
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance for our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
to provide for those who mourn in Zion,
to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,
the oil of joy instead of mourning,
a cloak of praise instead of a faint spirit,
so that they will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD to display his beauty. ...

I will rejoice greatly in the LORD.
My soul will celebrate because of my God,
for he has clothed me in garments of salvation.
With a robe of righteousness he covered me,
like a bridegroom who wears a beautiful headdress
like a priest,
and like a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.

For as the earth produces its growth,
and as a garden causes what has been sown to
sprout up,
so God the LORD will cause righteousness and
praise to sprout up
in the presence of all the nations.

Psalm of the Day ----- Psalm 71

CW p.92

Refrain

Blessed are they who hope, who hope in the Lord.

In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge;^{*}
let me never be put to shame.

Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness;^{*}
turn your ear to me and save me.

Be my rock of refuge to which I can always go;*
For you are my rock and my fortress.

Refrain

Since my youth, O God, you have taught me,*
and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.

Even when I am old and gray,*
do not forsake me, O God,

till I declare your power to the next generation,*
your might to all who are to come.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

Second Lesson ----- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not extinguish the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt. But test everything. Hold on to the good. Keep away from every kind of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Verse of the Day

Matthew 11:10

Tune: CW 2

C: See, my mess - en - ger I send. To his

preach - ing close - ly tend. He pre - pares the
 way for me. Soon the migh - ty Lord you'll see.

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Stand.

Gospel ----- John 1:6-8,19-28

After the announcement of the Gospel, the congregation sings:

C: Glo - ry be to you, O Lord!

There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. ...

This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?"

He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, "I am not the Christ."

And they asked him, "Who are you then? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

"No," he answered.

After the Gospel, the congregation sings:

Then they asked him, "Who are you? Tell us so we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' just as Isaiah the prophet said."

They had been sent from the Pharisees. So they asked John, "Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?"

"I baptize with water," John answered. "Among you stands one you do not know. He is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."

These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.



C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Nicene Creed

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Be seated.

Hymn of the Day ----- Arise, O Christian People

CW 14

1. Arise, O Christian people! Prepare yourselves today.
Prepare to greet the Savior, Who takes your sins away.

To us by grace alone The truth and light was given;
The promised Lord from heaven To all the world is shown.

2. Prepare the way before him; Prepare for him the best.
Cast out what would offend him, This great, this heav'nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way: The lowly valleys raising,
The heights of pride abasing, His path all even lay.
3. The humble heart and lowly God raises up on high;
Beneath his feet in terror The haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right, That heeds God's invitation
And makes true preparation—It is the Lord's delight.
4. Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus; Turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive you This blessed Adventtide.
From stall and manger low Come now to dwell within me;
I'll sing your praises gladly And forth your glory show.

Sermon ----- Isaiah 61:1-3,10,11

The Good News of Jesus' Advent Gives Us Real Joy

Stand.

After the sermon, the congregation sings:

C: Cre - ate 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.

Be seated.

Offering

Stand.

Prayer of the Church

The minister calls for the petitions and the congregation prays with “Lord, have mercy.”

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the Church, preparing to celebrate the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that remembering John the Forerunner’s preaching of the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, we, too, may die to sin and rise to new life, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the Church, that the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world would richly and daily forgive our sins and the sins of all believers; and for Mark Schroeder, our Synod president; Dennis Klatt, our district president; Edwin Lehmann, our circuit pastor; and all pastors in Christ, that they would remain faithful to not deny but confess Him, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

*Online giving option:
 mluther.org/give*



*Offerings support the spread
 of the Gospel here and around the world.*

- M: For the children of our families, that every darkness would be lightened by Christ's gracious visitation; and that God would preserve them from dangers to body and soul, guide them by His Word in wise paths, and keep them firm in the faith until life's end, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**
- M: For all in authority, that they would be given wisdom and insight until the day when Christ comes again in glory to usher in His kingdom, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**
- M: For those afflicted with pain, sickness, trials and difficulties, [*especially* _____,] that they may be granted health and the certainty that our bodies will be incorruptible and immortal when Christ returns to make all things new, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**
- M: For the Church, as she eagerly awaits the return of her Bridegroom, that we would not grow weary, but be strengthened through the Word and Sacraments to ever hold fast to Christ's promise of salvation, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**
- M: O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C: **Amen.**

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.

THE SACRAMENT

M: The Lord be with you.



C: And al - so with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.



C: We lift them up un - to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.



C: It is good and right so to do.

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Sanctus



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: A - men.

O Christ, Lamb of God

Agnus Dei

C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

Be seated.

DISTRIBUTION

In Holy Communion we believe that Jesus gives us his own body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of our sins. We ask that, in keeping with God's Word, only confirmed members who are in confessional unity with our church (WELS and ELS) would come forward to receive this sacrament. If you have any questions or are interested in communicant membership, please speak with the pastor.

During the distribution, the congregation sings the following hymns:

Hymn ----- O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

CW 18

1. O Lord, how shall I meet you, How welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you, My Hope, my heart's Delight.
O Jesus, let your Word be A lamp to light my way,
To show me how to please you, To guide me ev'ry day.
2. Love caused your incarnation; Love brought you down to me.
Your thirst for my salvation Procured my liberty.
Oh, love beyond all telling That led you to embrace
In love, all love excelling, Our lost and fallen race!
3. Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted, Who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed And tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you, He's standing at the door
Who best can help and cheer you And bids you weep no more.
4. Sin's debt, that fearful burden, Let not your souls distress;
Your guilt the Lord will pardon And cover by his grace.
He comes, for you procuring The peace of sin forgiv'n,
His children thus securing A heritage in heav'n.

5. He comes to judge the nations, A terror to his foes,
A light of consolations, And blessed hope to those
Who love the Lord's appearing. O glorious Sun, now come,
Send forth your beams most cheering, And guide us safely home.

Hymn ----- When All the World Was Cursed

CW 20

1. When all the world was cursed By Moses' condemnation,
Saint John the Baptist came With words of consolation.
With true forerunner's zeal The greater one he named,
And him, as yet unknown, As Savior he proclaimed.
2. Before Saint John was born, He leaped in joyful meeting,
Confessing him as Lord Whose mother he was greeting.
By Jordan's rolling stream, A new Elijah bold,
He testified of him Whom prophets had foretold.
3. Behold the Lamb of God, Who bears the world's transgression,
Whose sacrifice removes The devil's dread oppression.
Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away our sin,
Who for our peace and joy Will full atonement win.
4. Oh, grant, dear Lord of love, That we receive, rejoicing,
The word proclaimed by John, Our true repentance voicing,
That gladly we may walk Upon our Savior's way
Until we live with him In his eternal day.

After the distribution is finished the congregation stands and sings:

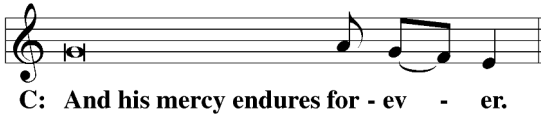
Song of Simeon

Nunc Dimittis



C: Lord, now you let your servant de - part in peace ac-cord-ing
to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have pre-
pared be - fore the face of all people, a light to light - en the
Gen-tiles and the glo - ry of your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

M: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.



C: And his mercy endures for - ev - er.

M: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

M: 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: A - men. A - men. A - men.

Be seated.

Hymn ----- Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

CW 12

1. Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry voice a song.
2. He comes the captives to release,
In Satan's prison held.
The gates of brass before him burst;
The iron fetters yield.
3. He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
To enrich the humble poor.
4. Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Your welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring
With your beloved name.



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