

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 12, 2021 – 9:30 a.m.

AS WE GATHER

Some Advent wreaths have a pink candle for this Third Sunday in Advent. The festive, joyful pink candle reflects today's Readings, which begin to anticipate the unbridled joy that Jesus' birth brings. We do many joyful things during Advent. We sing Christmas carols, bake cookies, decorate our homes inside and out, and travel far and wide to visit those we love. Yet all these joyful things point to an even greater joy—the joy that comes by the Creator of the universe, the Lord almighty, who loves you, forgives you in Jesus, and cares about you beyond human measure! “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!”

PRESERVICE “Immanuel” -Michael Card

HYMN “Prepare the Royal Highway” *LSB* 343

1 Prepare the royal highway;
The King of kings is near!

Let ev'ry hill and valley
A level road appear!

Then greet the King of Glory
Foretold in sacred story: Refrain

ref Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!

2 God's people, see Him coming:
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! Refrain

3 Then fling the gates wide open
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him!
All nations, now adore Him! Refrain

4 His is no earthly kingdom;
It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kindness so abounding: Refrain

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INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Zephaniah 3:14a, 15b; 16b–17, 20*

Pastor: Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart.

People: The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil.

Pastor: “Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak.

People: The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save;

Pastor: He will rejoice over you with gladness; He will quiet you by His love;

People: He will exult over you with loud singing.

Pastor: I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; 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.

People: O come, let us worship Him!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Today, as we light our third candle, things are a bit different. The focus of this Sunday is different, and so is the color. Purple and blue are colors of royalty, and the colors reminds us of our coming King, Jesus. The blue candles that we have lit over the last two weeks remind us of this. Today, we celebrate *Gaudete* Sunday, which means *rejoice*. The third Sunday in Advent shifts from the repentant nature of the season to that of rejoicing. From the prophet Zephaniah, we hear, “Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O Daughter of Jerusalem!” and “The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one Who will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness; He will quiet you by His love; He will exult over you with loud singing.” St. Paul writes in our epistle, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.”

As we light our candles, we remember our Lord’s first and second comings with the blue ones, and the call to rejoice with the rose one. We sing selected verses of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” as the Advent wreath is lit.

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel.

6. O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain*

7. O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid all our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace. *Refrain*

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION Based on Psalm 85:4-7

Pastor: Having emerged from the waters of Baptism as God’s new creation in Christ, we confess our sins to God and one another. We confess to You, O Lord, that we are captive to sin in thought, word, and deed. We have wandered from You. Our wonderings have at times turned into doubts that drew us away from You. With the Psalmist, we ask:

People: Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation towards us!

Pastor: Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

People: Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.

Pastor: Our Lord is true to His nature, and grants us forgiveness, pardon, and peace, because of Jesus. Hear and receive our Lord's forgiveness: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

INTROIT *Psalm 146:5–8; antiphon: Philippians 4:4*

Pastor: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

People: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

Pastor: who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever;

People: who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry.

Pastor: The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.

**People: 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.**

Pastor: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. You, Lord Jesus, caused the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the possessed to be free, the dead to be raised. By Your death and resurrection, You promise to raise us to new life; fill us with the joy that comes from You alone that our lives may radiate Your joy in this broken world; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Zephaniah 3:14–20* (God will gather His scattered people and restore them to Him.) Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach. Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; 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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM *Psalm 85*

Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob. You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin. You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger. Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us! Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations? Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation. Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly. Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land. Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down

from the sky. Yes, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.

GRADUAL *Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.*

Pastor: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

People: Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Pastor: Behold, your king is coming to you;

People: righteous and having salvation.

Pastor: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

People: From the house of the Lord we bless you.

EPISTLE *Philippians 4:4–7* (The Lord invites us to bring our worries to Him in prayer.) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 7:18–28* (The lame walk, the blind see, and the poor have good news spoken to them.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the seventh chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” And when the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’” In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” When John’s messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’ I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY “Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee” *LSB 803*

1 Joyful, joyful we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow’rs before Thee,
Praising Thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
Drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.

2 All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

△ 3 Thou art giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Fountainhead of love divine:
Joyful, we Thy heav'n inherit!
Joyful, we by grace are Thine!

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SERMON

One of the most helpful things I ever learned came from a passing comment made in a pastoral counseling class. It was a comment that illuminated the challenges and realities that came with living by faith. In his lecture, Dr. Reynolds pointed out that the first three presidents of the Missouri Synod all had mental breakdowns *while* serving, and that they had intense moments where they wrestled with doubt, depression, and despair. His observation struck me: *they weren't spared of that? Men with great faith had those issues?* As I was thinking on his point, it brought to mind other Lutherans who struggled with living by faith. Martin Luther, the famous reformer, was one of them, too. He had his moments of doubt and despair. He once wrote in a letter: "For more than a week I was close to the gates of death and hell. I trembled in all my members. Christ was wholly lost. I was shaken by desperation and blasphemy of God." Another Lutheran father, Philip Melancthon, struggled with the same issues at times. So did others outside of Lutheran circles. John Calvin, the father of the Reformed movement, and Charles Spurgeon, a Baptist pastor known as "The Prince of Preachers," struggled as well. Mother Theresa did, as did Pope Francis. Famous apologist and writer, C. S. Lewis struggled with faith as well.

Even Scripture is full of people who struggled to live by faith. Not everyone is like a Daniel or Joseph. Abraham and Sarah are some of those people who struggled to live by faith. So are Jacob, Moses, Elijah, Job, and Jeremiah. These people held to God's Word and promises, but they also had their moments where doubt, struggle, and despair affected their walk of faith. They are just like us. Living by faith is not easy.

Another person that we can add to this list, though, is unexpected. It is John the Baptist, He, too, endured disappointments, unmet expectations, and the silence of God. Today, we find John at his lowest. He is shackled and chained in a cold, damp, wet, dark prison, and is all-alone. He questions his life's work and ministry. He wonders if Jesus is Who He says He is: "**Are you the One Who is to come, or shall we look for another?**" We've asked that, too, haven't we? Today, as we ask that question with John, we encounter a Savior Who faithfully walks alongside His people as they struggle to live by faith in Him and His promises. We will see how Jesus answers John's question and struggles, as well as our own.

As John sits in prison, he hears about the healings of Jesus, and these acts prompt a question for the Baptist. Luke says that "**John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, 'Are you the One Who is to come, or shall we look to another?'**" Did you hear that question? It sounds strange coming from John the Baptist, doesn't it? He was at our Lord's baptism when he heard, "**This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased.**" John even made this declaration about Jesus: "**Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world.**" John even seems to know his place and role. He said, "**He must increase, but I must decrease.**" It seems strange to think that John the Baptist could ask such a question!

But, it is, *his question*. He asks it, and it is for *him*. Jesus tells John's disciples to "tell John" His answer. Verse 23 is even meant for him: "**Blessed is the one who is not offended by Me.**" John the Baptist had used images of judgment to describe the ministry of Jesus. He said, "**His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.**" But, that *hasn't happened yet*. Those *acts of judgment haven't taken place*, but acts of love, mercy, and compassion have, instead! And, as the forerunner of Jesus, he is not out preparing the way, but he is locked in prison. He is locked up for being faithful, he is still in danger of being executed for doing his job, and he still suffers the darkness of sin, despite the arrival of the Light of the World. His question reveals the uncertainty about the very message he had been proclaiming in the first place. It reveals the challenge of living by faith. Things weren't going the way John thought, or had expected. Amidst John's faith, there is doubt. "**Are you the One Who is to come, or shall we look for another?**"

John may have been the first to articulate this question, but every follower of Jesus who has encountered difficulty and suffering, especially because of their relationship to Jesus, has asked this question. Living by faith *isn't always easy*. It is hard. We live in the midst of seeming contradictions and paradoxes. God reigns, but evil seems to have the upper hand, and injustices are all around. The Bible says that God's love and mercies are new every morning, but the storm clouds are already there when I wake up, and the rain doesn't seem to be stopping anytime soon. God is good, but He seems to be good to everyone else *but me*. And as Christians, we face disappointments and uncertainties, like John. Maybe that prayer for a loved one wasn't answered how we had hoped, or plans didn't go how I would have imagined. We can struggle to see how God is going to use our current circumstances for our good in Christ, as Paul proclaims in Romans 8:28. We can suffer for doing good, or for living and serving faithfully in God's name. Satan's darts and arrows seem to hit bullseyes on our hearts and minds. Living by faith *isn't always easy*. *It is hard*. John the Baptist knows that. Jesus knows that, too.

Even though God's people struggle, we have a faithful God who doesn't forsake His people. Jesus answers John, and us, but not in the way we might expect. He points us to two things. Jesus tells John's messengers: "**Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.**" Jesus points John the Baptist to His works, Christ's works. Jesus was doing the work of the Messiah; all of those miracles were signs and fulfillment of His coming! In His ministry, Jesus was undoing the effects of sin by His miracles. He was going to undo the bondage that creation finds itself in, and is subjected to. Jesus would bring that final judgment one day, and He bore God's wrath on the cross. Jesus would do all of these things, but in His time, in His way. To calm John's heart and mind, and to strengthen his faith, Jesus points John to His works, His doings. To reorient John's expectations, and to reinvigorate his faith walk, Jesus points John to His work, and fulfilled promises.

He does the same for us; He points us to what He has done, and what God is doing. When living by faith is a challenge, we look back to His past examples of faithfulness. He look and see how He was faithful to us, how He didn't leave us or forsake us. We look back to past examples of support, where our Lord has helped us through the timely word of a friend, the action of a spouse, that unexpected provision, or by getting us through to the other side of a hard experience. We look back to past examples of His grace, which is His undeserved mercy and kindness to us. We can look to His sacraments which are physical, tangible ways in which God shows us His grace and good will toward us. Last of all, we look to the sending of His Son, who died and rose for us. Jesus is the greatest example of God's love, kindness, grace, and mercy toward us. We bring these past acts of Jesus with us to the present, letting them remind us of what our God has done, is doing, and will do in us, and for us. He look to the works of Christ.

The other thing that Jesus does is point us to the Word. Remember, He sends the messengers to *tell John*. John doesn't get to see these things; he only *hears them*. John only gets a report, a witness, a word, *a promise*. Sometimes, we only hear it, too. We only hear the promise; we don't always get to see them this side of heaven. We hear promises of the new Heaven and Earth, our Lord's glorious return, His promise to restore us, how He does all things for our good, the resurrection of the dead, and our future heavenly home. We only *hear these things*, right? But, God works through His Word. God works through that word to bring hope, strength, support, forgiveness, peace, and joy. These promises sustain and strengthen our faith as we walk by faith.

It might surprise us to hear people like John the Baptist, Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Job, Luther, Walther, Lewis, and Calvin at times struggled with their faith. However, with all of them, we see the same thing: God's people at times may struggle living by faith, but behind them all, and walking with them, is a faithful, forgiving God, Who never forsakes them. That is something to rejoice in. O Come, O come, Emmanuel. Amen.

HOLY BAPTISM

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

CONG: Amen.

Pastor: Our Lord commanded Baptism, saying to His disciples in the last chapter of Matthew: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age." The holy apostles of the Lord have written: "The promise is for you and for your children," and: "Baptism now saves you."

We also learn from the Word of God that we are all conceived and born sinful and so are in need of forgiveness. We would be lost forever unless delivered from sin, death, and everlasting condemnation. But the Father of all mercy and grace has sent His Son, Jesus Christ, who atoned for the sin of the whole world that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Receive the sign of the holy cross upon your forehead and upon your heart to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

Hear how our Lord Jesus Christ has opened the kingdom of God to little children: "People were bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.'"

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

CONG: Praise to You, O Christ.

Pastor: Dear parents and sponsors: It is your task as parents and sponsors to confess with the whole Church the faith in our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in whose name this child is to be baptized. After this child has been baptized, you are at all times to remember him in your prayers, put him in mind of his Baptism, and faithfully bring him to the services of God's house. As he grows in years, you should place in his hands the Holy Scriptures, provide for him further instruction in the Christian faith, and teach him the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, that living in the covenant of his Baptism and in communion with the Church, he may lead a godly life until the day of Jesus Christ. This, then, you intend gladly and willingly to do?

Parents and Sponsors: Yes.

Pastor: God enable you all to will and to do this faithful and loving work and with His grace fulfill what we are unable to do. In order to implore the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the gathering of this child into the family of our Father, let us with all the family pray the prayer he gave us.

CONG: 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.

Pastor: The Lord preserve your coming in and your going out from this time forth and even forevermore.

CONG: Amen.

Pastor: Because this child cannot answer for himself, we shall all, together with his parents and sponsors, faithfully speak on his behalf in testimony of the forgiveness of sin and the birth of the life of faith which God our Father bestows in and through Baptism.

Pastor: Do you renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?

CONG: I do renounce them.

Pastor: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?

CONG: Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son?

CONG: Yes, 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

CONG: Yes, 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.

Pastor: Who brings this child to be baptized?

Parents: We do.

Pastor: How is this child named?

Parents: Ryder Stephen Lucas

Pastor: Ryder Stephen Lucas, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

CONG: Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you the new birth of water and of the Spirit and has forgiven you all your sins, strengthen you with His grace to life everlasting. Peace be with you.

CONG: Amen.

Pastor: Receive this burning light. Live always by the light of Christ, and be ever watchful for His coming that you may meet Him with joy and enter with Him to the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which shall have no end.

Let us pray: Almighty and most merciful God and Father, we thank and praise You that You graciously preserve and enlarge Your family and have granted Ryder Stephen the new birth in Holy Baptism and made him a member of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and an heir of Your heavenly kingdom. We humbly implore You that, as he has now become Your child, You would keep him in his baptismal grace, that according to Your good pleasure he may faithfully grow to lead a godly life to the praise and honor of Your holy name and finally, with all Your saints, obtain the promised inheritance in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

CONG: Amen.

Pastor: Through Baptism, God has added Ryder Stephen to his own people to declare the wonderful deeds of our Savior, who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

CONG: We welcome you into the Lord's family. We receive you as a fellow member of the body of Christ, a child of the same heavenly Father, to work with us in His kingdom.

Pastor: And you, Ryder Stephen, the Lord bless you in all your ways from this time forward and even forevermore. Peace be with you.

CONG: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

OFFERING "Sing a New Song"

We offer our gifts to the Lord as we use this time in our service for contemplation and preparation for the sacrament of communion. Offerings can be placed in the plates at the back entrance doors as you leave the sanctuary.

For meditation, from Luther's Small Catechism, The Sacrament of Holy Baptism:

How can water do such great things? Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water. For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three: "He saved us through the washing and rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying." (Titus 3:5-8)

PREFACE 2 Timothy 4:22

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose identity as the beloved Son of God we find our identity as His dear children—loved, forgiven, and filled with joy. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho-san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

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PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Mighty and merciful Lord of all, we give You all thanks, praise, honor, and worship for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who gave sight to the blind, who made the lame walk, who restored hearing to the deaf, who cast out demons, who raised the dead. By these signs, You point to Christ's future coming for which we yearn, when all things will be made new. In this bread and cup, Christ's body and blood, You beckon us to glimpse the world to come, when You will restore all creation. We give You thanks and praise for speaking Your Word to us, that we may live in Your kingdom now in these days and forever worship and adore You in the kingdom to come. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment.

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI



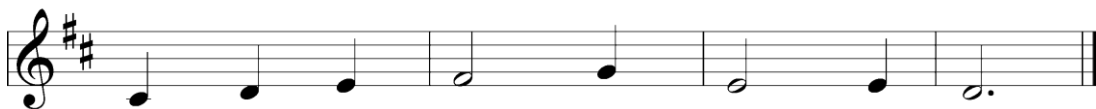
1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,



You take the sin of the world a - way;
You take the sin of the world a - way;



O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,



Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Divine Service, Setting Four from *Lutheran Service Book* © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. Reprinted with permission.

You are invited to receive the Lord’s Supper if you believe and confess that Jesus Christ is your Savior from sin, you are a baptized child of the Triune God, and you believe that He gives you His body and blood in the bread and wine you receive. White grape juice can be found in the center of each tray for those who cannot receive alcohol. Children are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS “We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight” *LSB* 720

1 We walk by faith and not by sight,
No gracious words we hear
From Him who spoke as none e’er spoke,
But we believe Him near.

2 We may not touch His hands and side,
Nor follow where He trod;
But in His promise we rejoice
And cry “My Lord and God!”

3 Help then, O Lord, our unbelief;
And may our faith abound
To call on You when You are near
And seek where You are found.

4 For You, O resurrected Lord,
Are found in means divine:
Beneath the water and the Word,
Beneath the bread and wine.

5 Lord, when our life of faith is done,
In realms of clearer light
We may behold You as You are,
With full and endless sight.
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“Lead Me, Guide Me” *LSB* 721

Ref Lead me, guide me, along the way;
For if You lead me, I cannot stray.
Lord, let me walk each day with Thee.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

1 I am weak and I need Thy strength and pow’r
To help me over my weakest hour.
Help me through the darkness Thy face to see.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. Refrain

2 Help me tread in the paths of righteousness,
Be my aid when Satan and sin oppress.
I am putting all my trust in Thee.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. Refrain

3 I am lost if You take Your hand from me,
I am blind without Thy light to see.
Lord, always let me Thy servant be.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. Refrain

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BLESSING

Pastor: May our Lord's body and blood strengthen and preserve you in true faith to life everlasting. Depart in peace and with joy.

People: Amen.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION *Philippians 4:5–7; Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: Amen.

HYMN "Hark the Glad Sound" *LSB* 349

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 pris'ners to release,
In Satan's bondage 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,
Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring
With Thy belovèd name.

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POSTLUDE "Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

GENEROSITY THOUGHTS: *Philippians 4:5-6* – “The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Wouldn’t you like to be free from worry and anxiety? Isn’t it worry and anxiety that often keep us from living the generous life God has called us to? St. Paul contrasts anxiety with prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving in making our requests known to God. In other words, when you are tempted to anxiety and worry, pray to the Lord with a thankful heart and pour out your supplications before Him.

ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES will be held at Emmaus on Wednesdays, December 1, 8, and 15, at 11:30 a.m. (There will be a 7 p.m. service at Bethel Lutheran Church.)

CHRISTMAS EVE worship services will be held at Emmaus at 5 p.m. and 10 p.m.

CHRISTMAS DECORATION DONATIONS: Sanctuary Christmas decoration donation slips are available in the narthex. Please indicate your willingness to help defray decoration costs by using the donation slip. Place in the offering plate, hand to an usher or leave it on Maria’s desk. Donation slips will be available in the narthex through December 25.

THE 2022 ALTAR FLOWER CHART is now posted on the bulletin board by the office. Sign up to bring altar flowers on a special Sunday in 2022. Write your name and the occasion (in memory, anniversary, birthday...) on the flower chart for inclusion in the Sunday bulletin announcements.

HEAR “THE LUTHERAN HOUR” on Sunday mornings at 6:05 a.m. on WCCO 830 AM radio. Next week’s broadcast: “Charlie Brown Christmas Tree” Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. The drama surrounding the first airing of “The Charlie Brown Christmas Special” 56 years ago, against all odds, it gave viewers the true story of Christmas and doomed aluminum Christmas trees to near extinction. (Luke 2:1-15)

BEACON BUDDIES 1ST-4TH GRADE BASKETBALL: Concordia Academy’s new Beacon Buddies program offers basketball for all 1st-4th grade boys and girls on Saturday mornings starting in January. Boys and girls can expect a fun, supportive environment as they learn the game and skills of basketball and develop their abilities. To get more information or register for this six-week program, go to www.concordiaacademy.com/beaconbuddies .

MAIN STREET LIVING CHOIR

You are invited to sing in the Main Street Living Choir!
Recording for the television program will be on Saturday, January 29
at 9 AM at Emanuel Lutheran Church.
Please contact Amy Schutte to reserve a spot!

Emanuel Lutheran Church
2075 70th St E, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077
651-457-3929 X111 (for Amy)
Amy's Email: acschutte10@gmail.com

If we do not have enough singers, we will have to cancel, so reserve a spot ASAP! Thank you!