

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Saturday, December 15, 2018

5:00 PM

GIVING THANKS TO GOD THROUGH WORSHIP

Welcome! We hope that your time in worship will encourage and strengthen your relationship with God. We share the greatest hope through the One who loves you most – Jesus Christ! We invite all worshipers today to fill out the Fellowship Pew Pad during the offering portion of worship. You are also invited to make a prayer request on the green card, which is in the pew rack and then place the card in the offering plate or hand them to an usher. We pray God’s blessings upon you and invite you to worship with us every Saturday at 5:00 pm and Sunday morning at 9:00 am.

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent wreath is one of the most popular symbols used by Christians during the season of Advent. These wreaths, consisting of a circle of evergreen branches set around four candles, are used in both churches and Christian homes. The evergreen circle stands for the eternal life that Christ has won for all believers. The burning candles represent the coming of Christ as the light of the world (John 1:4-9). A candle is lit on the first Sunday of Advent, with another one lit on each succeeding Sunday.

The colors of the Advent candles can vary. Zion’s wreath consists of three blue candles and one rose-colored or pink candle. The blue candles signify the hopeful anticipation of the season; the joyfully colored pink candle is reserved for the third Sunday in Advent traditionally known as *Gaudete Sunday*, which means “rejoice” in Latin. – from Philippians 4:4, *Rejoice...the Lord is near!*

THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE

(December 16 – December 22)

John 1:17: *“The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (NIV)*

WELCOME

✠ DIVINE SERVICE SETTING THREE ✠

(Lutheran Service Book page 184)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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

People: **Amen.** *[Matthew 28:19b; 18-20]*

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, calling on Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. *[Hebrews 10:22]*

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

People: **who made heaven and earth.** *[Psalm 124:8]*

Pastor: I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,

People: **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

[Psalm 32:5]

Silence for reflection on God's word and for self-examination

Pastor: Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: **O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Pastor: 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.

Pastor: May He who began this good work within you bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Philippians 1:6]

The peace of the Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Almighty God, as we light the candles on this wreath marking our days of preparation for Christ's advent, stir up within us Your Spirit, that we may remember, rejoice and give thanks for Your faithfulness and for all Your blessings.

People: Father, enlighten us with Your grace, that we may welcome others as You have welcomed us. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.

+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +

🕯️🕯️🕯️ LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Sts. 5 & 6) – LSB 357

**O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

**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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one Go, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Please be seated

OLD TESTAMENT: ZEPHANIAH 3:14-20

Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. On that day they will say to Jerusalem, "Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp. The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

"I will remove from you all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals, which is a burden and reproach for you. At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame. At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says the LORD. *(NIV)*

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: Thanks be to God. *(Responses are spoken)*

NEW TESTAMENT: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (NIV)

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**



Please rise

HYMN *“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”* – LSB 338

THE HOLY GOSPEL: LUKE 7:18-28

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 7th chapter.

John’s disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, he sent them to the Lord to ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

When the men came to Jesus, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?’”

At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

After John’s messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to

see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’

I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” (NIV)

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

APOSTLES' CREED

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

And 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.

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.

Please be seated

HYMN *“O Sing of Christ” – LSB 362*

THE SERMON

John 1:17: *“The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (NIV)*

HYMN OF RESPONSE

"O Lord, Hear My Prayer" – LSB 780

**O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer;
When I call answer me.**

**O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer;
Come and listen to me.**

**O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer;
When I call answer me.**

**O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer;
Come and listen to me.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O God, hear the prayers and petitions of Your people. We do not make requests of You because we are righteous, but because of Your great mercy (Daniel 9:18).

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Brief silence

Pastor: God, our Father, Your Son calls us to pray with confidence. Give us Your Spirit to see You in the person of Your Son, knowing that He and none other is the One who came to bear our sins and be our Savior. Encourage us in true faith and fill us with joy, knowing He will come again to make all things new. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Father in heaven, since You graciously rule Your people, bless and guide all who are in authority to rule justly. Stir up Your Spirit among Your people, that we may believe Your Word and live holy lives. Sustain the faith of all who suffer persecution and

death for the name of Christ, and keep us in true faith in Your Kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord Jesus, You gave bread to the hungry, sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf; You made the lame to walk and cleansed lepers; You raised the dead and preached Good News to the poor. Help again Your people - the hungry, the poor and unemployed, the sick, the dying, the grieving and all who are anxious of heart *especially* ...Graciously give them all that they need for their well-being, give them ears to hear the Good News of life and salvation, and quiet their fears with Your love. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Father, forgive us our sins and cleanse us from unrighteousness. Soften the hearts of those who reject Your Word, and renew those whose faith is faltering. Open our ears to Your call of repentance and to Your promise of mercy. Grant us to come to Your table in true faith, gladly receiving Christ's body and blood and the forgiveness He promises. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Father, into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Please be seated



SHARING GOD'S BLESSINGS: THE OFFERING

Commit yourselves to the LORD and serve Him only.

1 Samuel 7:3

Because we value your presence in worship and desire to serve you as best as we can, please use this time to complete the Fellowship Pew Pad and pass it to your neighbor. Prayer requests may be made by filling out the green card in the pew rack in front of you and placing it in the offering plate.

PRAYER

Pastor: We pray together:

People: Almighty God, all that we possess is from Your loving hand. Give us grace that we may honor You with all we own and forsake all covetous desires and the inordinate love of riches. Deliver us from the pursuit of passing things that we may seek the kingdom of Your Son and trust in His righteousness and so find love and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

Give us this day our
DAILY BREAD

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.
[Numbers 6:24-26]

People: **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

"The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns" – LSB 348

POSTLUDE

