



Faith Lutheran Church

***Faithfully Growing, Welcoming,
and Caring through Christ***

December 15, 2019

Third Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God,
the parent who rouses us from slumber,
the shepherd who gathers us on the
holy mountain, the deliverer who sets
us free.

C: Amen.

P: Let us come before the living God in confession (*A brief silence.*) As we wait and watch for the promised day of salvation:

C: we open our hearts to you, O God. Search us and know us. Reveal all that we keep inside.

**To you, O God, we confess our sins,
known and unknown. Forgive us,
renew us, and lead us in your ways of
justice and peace. Make us reflections
of the radiant love of your beloved Son,
Jesus Christ. Amen.**

P: Beloved children of the Most High, you are gathered before the righteous judge who has mercy on all. Splash exuberantly in the waters of baptism, where sin is washed away in the river of life. Dwell peacefully in the loving arms of the one who nurtures all creation. Go forth boldly in the assurance that your sins are forgiven in the name of the one who is coming and is already here + Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C: Amen.

OPENING HYMN *“Fling Wide the Door”*

**Fling wide the door, unbar the gate;
the King of glory comes in state;
the Lord of lords and King of kings,
the Savior of the world who brings
his great salvation to the earth.**

**So raise a shout of holy mirth
and praise our God and Lord,
Creator, Spirit, Word.**

**He is the rock of our belief,
the heart of mercy's gentle self.
His kingly crown is holiness;
his scepter is his loveliness;
he brings our sorrows to an end.
Now gladly praise our king and friend,
and worship him with song
for saving us from wrong.**

**Oh, happy towns and blessed lands
that live by their true king's commands.
And blessed be the hearts he rules,
the humble places where he dwells.
He is the rightful Son of bliss
who fills our lives and makes us his,
creator of the world,
our only strength for good.**

**Come, Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ;
our hearts are open wide in trust.
Oh, show us now your lovely grace,
upon our sorrows shine your face,
and let your Holy Spirit guide
our journey in your grace so wide.
We praise your holy name,
from age to age the same!**

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

C: And also with you.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

P: A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day:

in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

C: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE



**Third Sunday
of Advent**

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

**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.***

**2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way.**

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to you,

O Israel.

**3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,
as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.**

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice!

***Emmanuel shall come to you,
O Israel.***

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. (*A brief silence.*)

C: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Children's Church

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from Isaiah, the 35th chapter.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

R: Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

A Responsive Reading From Psalm 146

R: Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the LORD their God;

**C: who made heaven and earth,
the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;**

R: who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger. The LORD sets the captive free.

C: The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.

R: The LORD cares for the stranger;
the LORD sustains the orphan and
widow, but frustrates the way of
the wicked.

**C: The LORD shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all
generations. Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

A reading from James, the 5th chapter.

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged.

See, the Judge is standing at the doors!
As an example of suffering and patience,
beloved, take the prophets who spoke in
the name of the Lord.

R: Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 11th chapter.

C: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see:

the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at?

A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then 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, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

“Defining Expectations in a Divided World”

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

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

Hosanna to the Lord,

for he fulfills God's word!

**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

***Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!***

**Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.**

**All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing:**

Refrain

***Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!***

**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

***Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!***

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's 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 to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living
and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Keeping awake as we watch for Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need. (*A brief silence.*) Holy God, we rejoice that your promises take on flesh in Jesus. Grant patience to your church awaiting the fulfillment of your reign of justice and peace. Restore in us the hope that we are called to proclaim to the world. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

P: Life-giving God, we rejoice that you coax flowers from the desert and water from the wilderness. Send rain to parched fields and sun to flooded plains. Nurture all that lies sleeping under frozen ground. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

P: Almighty God, we rejoice in your authority as Prince of peace. Deliver us from those who wield power through unjust and oppressive ways. Raise up prophets to speak your truth in this and every nation. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

P: Gracious God, we rejoice that you dwell in human bodies. Renew signs of your joyful presence in people of all shapes, sizes, ages, and abilities.

(We pray especially for . . .)

Empower all to embrace their callings and the gifts of your Spirit.

Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Generous God, we rejoice that you create us to praise you. Strengthen the voices and hands of all who prepare to celebrate Christ's birth with music, dancing, and proclamation, in worship and in the community. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

P: Eternal God, we rejoice that all who die in Christ are raised to new life. We thank you for the lives of those who have prepared the way for us and have now joined the great cloud of witnesses (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

P: You hear the cries of our hearts, O Lord.
Fill us with hopeful expectation, that in
each day and hour we may love and
serve our neighbors, in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

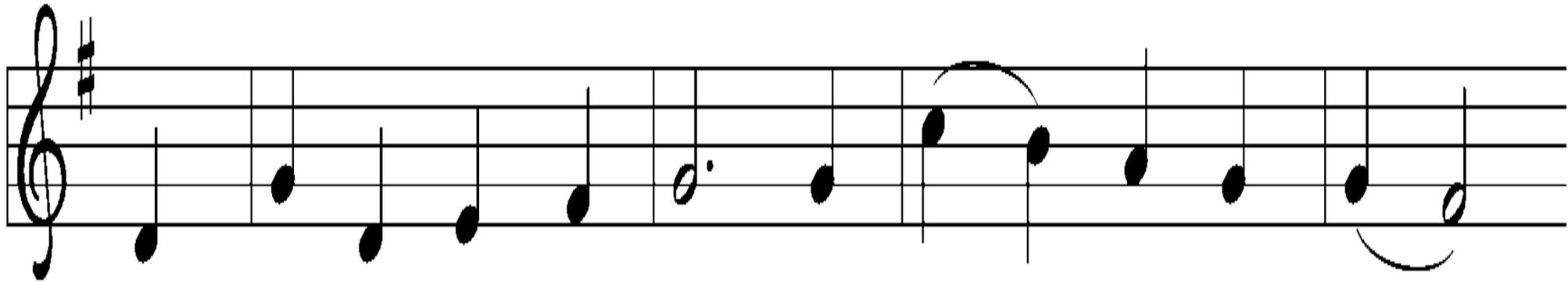
OFFERING

~VIDEO DURING OFFERING ~

“When Love Was Born”

by Mark Schultz

Offertory Response



1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;
2 May we thy boun - ties thus as stew - ards true re - ceive,



all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.
and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

DIALOGUE

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks and praise to the
Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give God thanks
and praise.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE 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.**

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: 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.

C: Amen.

BLESSING

P: Almighty God, Father, + Son,
and Holy Spirit, bless you
now and forever.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!”

Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding!

"Christ is near," we hear it say.

**"Cast away the works of darkness,
all you children of the day!"**

**Wakened by the solemn warning,
from earth's bondage let us rise;
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.**

**See the Lamb, so long expected,
come with pardon down from heav'n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all, to be forgiv'n;**

**So, when next he comes in glory
and the world is wrapped in fear,
he will shield us with his mercy
and with words of love draw near.**

**Honor, glory, might, and blessing
to the Father and the Son
with the everlasting Spirit
while unending ages run!**

DISMISSAL

P: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

2019 & 2020 Council Members – please stay for a brief meeting in the back of the sanctuary





