

Third Sunday in Advent



10:00 am (online)
December 13, 2020
Zion Lutheran Church
Camas, Washington
360-834-4201 Office

Susan Dollinger, Associate Pastor

"Rejoice always," begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. "All God's children got a robe," go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God's party.

Welcome and Announcements

GATHERING

Call to Worship

P: Illuminating God,

On the horizon, we see a tiny jewel of light.

P: It dances. It glimmers. A promise of dawn at the end of the darkest night.

It is the light of the World!

P: Emmanuel! - God-with-us, the Promised One.

We have seen your light and gather here awaiting the day of your coming. Come to us, Emmanuel! Amen.

"Prepare Ye"

Steven Schwartz

Prepare ye the way of the Lord,	prepare ye the way of the Lord.
Prepare ye the way of the Lord,	prepare ye the way of the Lord.
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Prepare ye the way of the Lord,	prepare ye the way of the Lord.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

P: Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection

P: Loving and forgiving God,

C: ***we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.***

P: People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, ☩ comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

Eternal Creator, with you each moment of life is full of wonder and surprise. We pray you to make us watchful as we await the coming of Christ. Stir up your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lighting the Advent Wreath

John & Judy Straub

God of justice and peace, healing and comfort, we see all that is wrong in our world and wonder where you are. We are a broken people, living in a broken time. We are unable to work together for our common good. Our nations are filled with conflict and violence. The fragile earth cries out with longing for healing. How is it, you might wonder, that we could celebrate joy when there's also so much suffering in the world? We come to this wreath to light and to celebrate the third week in Advent. Advent is a season of watchfulness: we listen and keep vigil for the hope of the promise of things to come.

Lighting a candle is a simple yet profound act. It is a testimony to the power of light over darkness.

It's an exercise of faith to address the unknown.

As we light this third candle of Advent, we continue our journey to Christmas.

Light three candles

Loving God, Into the midst of these dark times, whether we are ready or not, come the lights of Christmas, evoking a celebration, which some long for and some struggle deeply as it disrupts their time of sorrow. As we enter this Advent season, open all the dark places of our hearts. Allow your love and light to enter in. Remind us that you are the source of our hope. Help us to live each day knowing the joy Christ's light brings. **Amen.**

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" v. 3 Number 240

- 3 Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness. Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.

WORD

First Reading – Joe Keller Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; ²to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ⁸For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

L: Word of God, Word of life.

C: ***Thanks be to God.***

Responsive Reading

Luke 1:46b-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name. You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation. You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit, casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly. You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy, the promise made to our forebears, to Abraham and his children forever. You have been gracious to your land, O Lord; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob. ²You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins. ⁸I will listen to what the Lord God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you. ⁹Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land. ¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. ¹¹Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven. ¹²The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase. ¹³Righteousness shall go before the Lord and shall prepare for God a pathway.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

L: Word of God, Word of life.

C: ***Thanks be to God.***

Special Music "Mary, Did You Know?" Buddy Greene, Mark Lowry

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C: ***Glory to you, O Lord.***

Gospel Reading

John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for 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,' "as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: ***Praise to you, O Christ!***

Message

Pr. Susan Dollinger

Hymn of the Day

"All Earth is Hopeful"

Number 266

1. All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last! Furrows lie open for God's creative task: this, the labor of people who struggle to see how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.
2. People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell: "A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel"; she conceived him, "God with us," our brother, whose birth restores hope and courage to children of this earth.
3. Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared; new highways opened, new protocols declared. Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace! All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!

4. We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib. This same Lord Jesus today has come to live in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see our Jesus is with us and ever sets us free.

Nicene Creed

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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 truly 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 with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic 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.***

Prayers of the Church

God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news. Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, youth workers, lay leaders, administrators, and all those who work or volunteer to contribute to bringing your word to the people. Renew their spirits, and embolden them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through their actions. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant love. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Peace

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you as you journey into this season. ***Amen.***

Please share a time of peace online with one another using the chat comments or with someone next to you or spend this time in prayer.

Prayer of Preparation

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them as we gather around your feast to give thanks for all that you have made. Prepare our hearts for this offering that we may share in this meal of

grace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. ***Amen.***

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.

Invitation to Communion

Prayer after Communion

Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. ***Amen.***

Benediction

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ☩ now and forever, in the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Holy Spirit who is our own breath. ***Amen.***

SENDING

Sending Hymn

"Love Has Come"

Number 292

- 1 Love has come—a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies. See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises: love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.
- 2 Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying? Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers; Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.
- 3 Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free. Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking. Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas; Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Our thanks to this morning's musicians:

Brooke Danielson, Doug Danielson, Patrick Murphy, Jennifer Rhodes,
Kealey Sitler

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"Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord" Steven Schwartz

From Godspell

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"

Text: Wayne L. Wold; @1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune

"Mary, Did You Know?"

Buddy Greene, Mark Lowry; CCLI #839225; @1991, 1993 Rufus Music
(Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing); @Curb Word Music (Admin. by WC
Music Corp.)

"All Earth is Hopeful"

Text & Music: Alberto Taulé; Text tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall;

Music: TODA LA TIERRA; Spanish text and tune @1993 and tr. 1995 Centro
de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications

"Love Has Come"

Text: Ken Bible; @1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music; Music: F. Seguin; UN
FLAMBEAU