



**COMMUNITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH**
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Sunday, December 12, 2021
Third Sunday of Advent
Holy Communion

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

SONG *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (ELW 257) Verse 5 (next page)

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory.

Light three candles.

Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (ELW 257) Verse 6 (next page)**

WELCOME

We welcome you to our worship service this morning. We pray that you will leave refreshed by the hearing of God's Word and the fellowship of this community.

INTRODUCTION

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



- 1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
- 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
- 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
- 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



- Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



- un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

- 5 O come, O 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. *Refrain*
- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God, whose forgiveness is sure and whose loves endures forever.

Silence for reflection

God for whom we wait, **in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you. We fail in believing that your good news is for us. We falter in our call to tend your creation. We find our sense of self in material wealth. We fear those different from ourselves. We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us and assure us again of your saving grace.**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, hear this glad news: in the name of + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven. May you be strengthened anew to follow the way of peace. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG: *O Lord, How Shall I Meet You* (ELW 241)

GREETING

During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

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

And also with you.

KYRIE (next page)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The presiding minister leads the prayer of the day.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

A reading from Zephaniah.

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

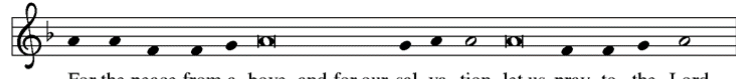
¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



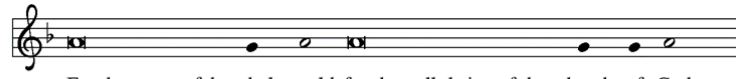
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



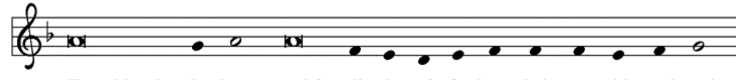
For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



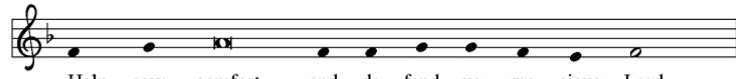
For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6

²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become my salvation.

³**With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.**

⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name;
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name is exalted.

⁵**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.**

⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

A reading from Philippians.

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will

experience God's joy and peace.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *Repeat alleluia*

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Blessed Be the God of Israel* (ELW 250)

APOSTLE'S 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

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

A brief silence.

Holy God, renew your church and raise up leaders who announce your good news. Grant peace to congregations and seminarians in the midst of transition. Guide the work of candidacy and call committees. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, your Spirit brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Breathe life into us, that we are inspired to live in harmony with one another and the planet. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Shepherding God, you lead your people in paths of righteousness. Raise up prophets in our own day who warn against captivity to greed and point us to the freedom found in generosity. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Nurturing God, you come near in times of worry and need. Cradle us in your arms, that we trust you and are not afraid. Attend to any who are hungry, imprisoned, sick or sorrowful, or in any kind of trouble, (*especially names, and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Rejoicing God, you exult over us in singing. Enliven the song of this assembly and bless the ministry of church musicians (*especially our organist Lloyd*). With instruments and dance, join our voices to the song of all creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We give you thanks for your servants who showed us your goodness and grace (*especially*). By the power of your Spirit, keep us steadfast in faith until we make our home with you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

We live by GOD's Grace, who gives us everything and asks that we give a portion back to him. It is for the church and its work in the community and world. There are many needs, so give to those the Holy Spirit inspires you to support.

OFFERING SONG: *Create in Me a Clean Heart (ELW 186)*

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of our waiting and watching, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them we offer our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made.

Teach us patience and hope as we care for those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

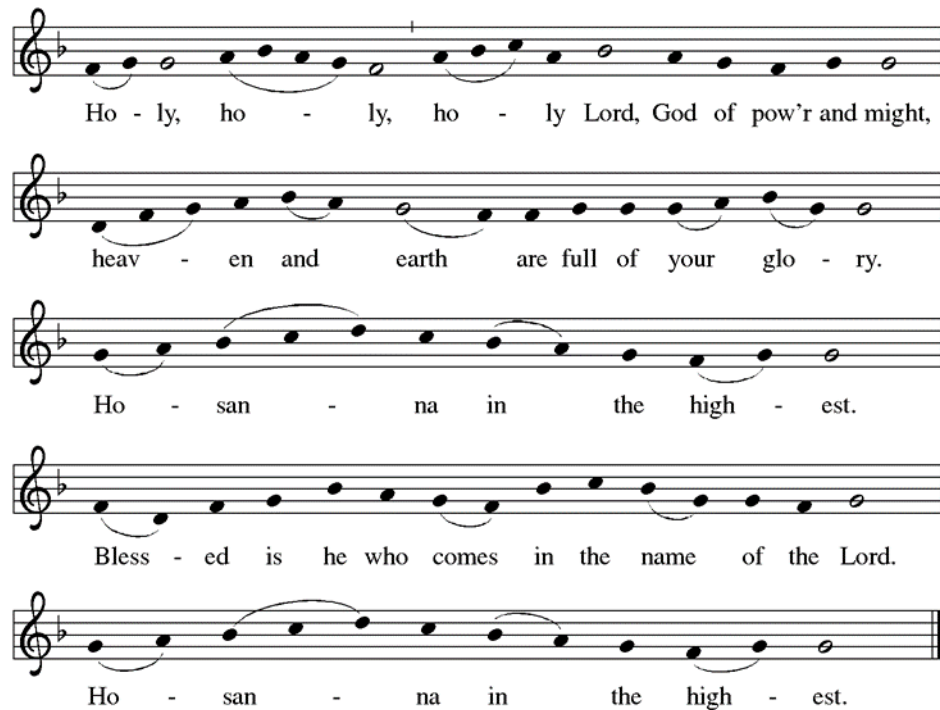
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

The presiding minister continues:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

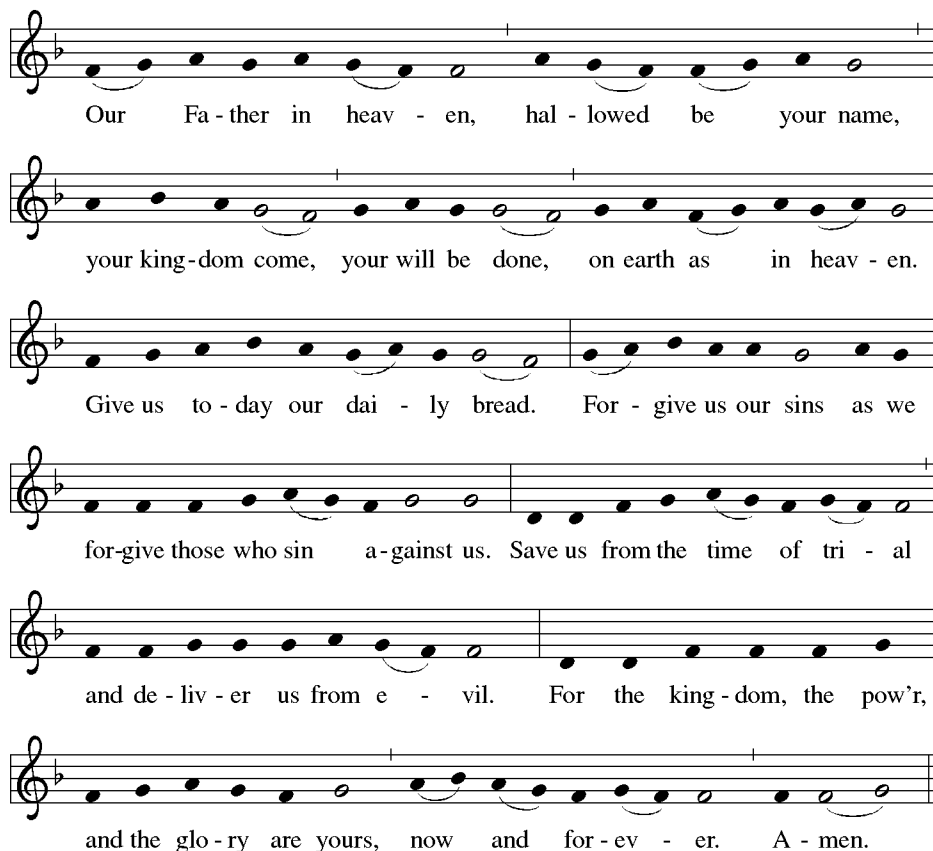
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

Our congregation participates in and partakes of the Lord's Supper during our worship service each week. All who have been baptized and profess a faith in Jesus Christ as risen Lord are welcome to commune with us, regardless of denomination, age or church background. Children who may be too young to receive communion are invited to receive a blessing from the pastor. Grape juice is available in the center of our serving trays for those who prefer it.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.

The assembly may be seated. The bread may be broken for the communion.

COMMUNION

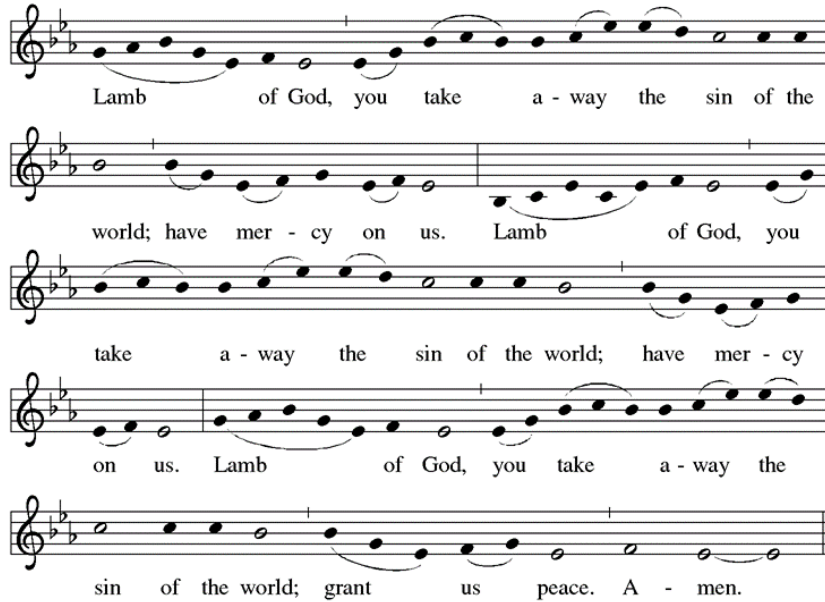
When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*



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

COMMUNION HYMNS *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* (ELW 272)

Away in a Manger (AWAY IN A MANGER) (ELW 277)

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. **Amen**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The Creator of all bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the life-giving Spirit guide you in the way of peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: *Savior of the Nations, Come* (ELW 263)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**