

Sunday, Dec. 15; 9:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent



St John's
Lutheran Church

(An usher rings the church bell at 8:55 a.m.)

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers arr. Anna Laura Page; JuBellation Handbell Choir

(Acolytes light the candles)

Advent Litany and Candle Lighting

ELW #257 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* vs. 1, 2

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.

(music continues under spoken word)

At every beginning there is a yearning
for the one who is coming.

O Emmanuel,

Open us up to your coming.

We gather together to allow our deeply held hopes
to be reshaped by God's promises.

O Emmanuel,

Open us up to your coming.

We wait for the day
when God will make for us a future

that is no longer predicated on our fear.
O Emmanuel,
Open us up to your coming.

We find a new receptivity within us
that desires God's will over our own will
and relies on God's justice and mercy to accomplish it.
O Emmanuel,
Open us up to your coming.

Jesus, we welcome your presence now
with the lighting of these candles,
whose flames bring warmth to winter
and fill this place with the glow of hope.
Amen.

(An Acolyte lights three candles.)

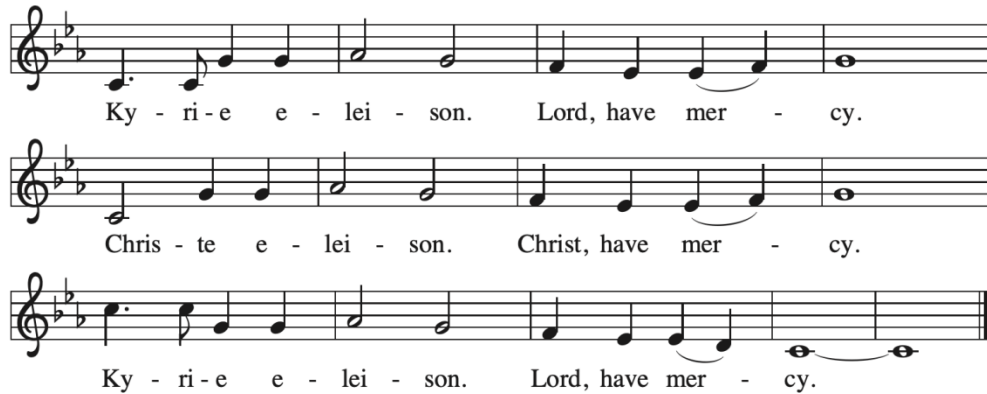
2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain*

Apostolic Greeting

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

ACS Setting 12



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.
Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

Canticle of Praise

ACS Setting 12, vs. 1



1 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
2 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
3 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;

yours is the prom - ise, the bless - ing, the birth.
yours the ho - san - nas, the dy - ing, re - birth.
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.

Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
Ours the re - joic - ing for na - ture re - claimed;
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;

ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.

Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;

yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of your faithful people, **Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, 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.**

Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20

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

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

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

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

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The 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
¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

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

¹⁹ I 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.

²⁰ At 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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Reading: Philippians 4:4-7

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And 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.

Children's Time

Gospel Acclamation *(please stand)*

Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

Verse: **Keep silence and listen | to the Lord, for he proclaims good tidings | of great joy.**

Gospel: Luke 1:5-23

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the first Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁵In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. ⁷But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were

getting on in years.

⁸Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. ¹⁰Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ¹⁸Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." ¹⁹The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur."
²¹Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. ²²When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon *(please sit)*

"Keeping Silence" - Pastor Christine Emerson

Hymn of the Day *(please stand)*

ELW #250; *Blessed Be the God of Israel*

- 1 Blessed be the God of Israel
who comes to set us free
and raises up new hope for us:
a Branch from David's tree.
So have the prophets long declared
that with a mighty arm
God would turn back our enemies
and all who wish us harm.

- 2 With promised mercy will God still
the covenant recall,
the oath once sworn to Abraham,
from foes to save us all;
that we might worship without fear
and offer lives of praise,
in holiness and righteousness
to serve God all our days.

- 3 My child, as prophet of the Lord
you will prepare the way,
to tell God's people they are saved
from sin's eternal sway.
Then shall God's mercy from on high
shine forth and never cease
to drive away the gloom of death
and lead us into peace.

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 the People

Petition: Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer**

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always!

And also with you.

Offering *(please sit)*

Carol for Advent by Nancy Price & Don Besig; St. John's Choir

(Ushers collect offering. Begin at the back of the sanctuary on the inside aisle, move to the front and continue around to the outside aisle returning with the offering to the Gathering Area. One usher collects offering from balcony.)

Offertory *(please stand – Acolytes receive the offering at this time)*

ELW #253; *He Came Down* vs. 1, 3, 4

1 He came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
hallelujah forevermore.

3 He came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
hallelujah forevermore.

4 He came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
hallelujah forevermore.

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray. Creator God,
**you made the whole world,
even the farthest stars,
and you draw near to feed us.**


**We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food
that we may live in expectation
for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
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.

Proper Preface

Holy, Holy



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

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

Invitation to the Table *(please sit)*

God feeds us with tender mercy.
Come to the table.

(Acolyte- comes forward for communion. The 2 ushers will go to the front of the Sanctuary and begin releasing worshippers to receive a wafer and wine.)

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, grant us peace.

Communion Hymn

ACS #901; *Now the Heavens Start to Whisper*

- 1 Now the heavens start to whisper,
as the veil is growing thin.
Earth from slumber wakes to listen
to the stirring, faint within:

- seed of promise, deeply planted,
child to spring from Jesse's stem!
Like the soil beneath the frostline,
hearts grow soft to welcome him.
- 2 Heavy clouds that block the moonlight
now begin to drift away.
Diamond brilliance through the darkness
shines the hope of coming day.
Christ, the morning star of splendor,
gleams within a world grown dim.
Heaven's ember fans to fullness;
hearts grow warm to welcome him.
- 3 Christ, eternal Sun of justice,
Christ, the rose of wisdom's seed,
come to bless with fire and fragrance
hours of yearning, hurt, and need.
In the lonely, in the stranger,
in the outcast, hid from view;
Child who comes to grace the manger,
teach our hearts to welcome you.

Post-Communion Blessing & Prayer *(please stand)*

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

Let us pray. Generous God,
**we thank you for the gift of life,
for the bread of salvation.
We thank you for coming among us,
for leading us into peace.
We thank you for showering us with mercy,
for sending us into the world.
Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us
as we feed the hungry in your name.
Amen.**

Benediction

God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our hope for the journey,
✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

(Acolytes extinguish the candles)

ELW #267; *Joy to the World* vs. 1, 2, 4

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Sending

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Linda Ranney

Altar Flowers

In memory of brother-in-law Steve Petersen by Pam Sorebo

Serving at Worship Today

Presider	Pastor Christine Emerson
Assistant	Eric Nielsen
Lector	Kathy Freitag
Acolytes	Matthew Kording, Emily Christopherson
Ushers	Brian Wagner, Paul Benish
Greeters	Larry Krause, Julie Kersten
Communion Servers	Mark Sontag, Patti Sontag, Jim Lincoln, Becky Cater
Media & Streaming	Scott Olsen
Screen Operator	Lois Mai
Musicians	Linda Ranney, organ/piano; Mark Lundin, director; St. John's Choir; JuBellation Handbell Choir

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