

Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church
Peachtree City, Georgia

The Third Sunday in Advent ☩ December 12, 2020 ☩ 8:30 A.M.

Fritz Wiese, Senior Pastor Miriam Beecher, Pastor David Beecher, Minister of Music

☐ = Pastor ☒ = Lector [reader] ☑ = Congregation *ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (hymnal, if you have one at home)*

PRELUDES

Welcome to worship! Today's worship includes the sacrament of communion, so please pick up a prefilled communion "kit" on the altar rail as you approach the altar. Please tell an usher if you need a communion kit brought to you where you sit. At home you may prepare ahead of time wine/grape juice and bread appropriate for your family. Our liturgy declares we celebrate with "the church on earth and the hosts of heaven." We acknowledge that communion always connects us "remotely" and powerfully with the Church through time and space.

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Fritz

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

☐ Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, ☩ who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things. ☑ **Amen.**

☐ Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God. *Silence is kept 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, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace.
Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

☐ God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, ☩ your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace. ☑ **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN: Prepare the Royal Highway

ELW Hymn 264

**1 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!

**3 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**

**4 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**

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship; Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress; AF License SAS000345

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.**

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE and KYRIE

ELW Page 138

☒ In peace, let us pray to the Lord. ☑ **Lord, have mercy.**

☒ For the peace from above, and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord. ☑ **Lord, have mercy.** ▶

- L** 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. **G** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord. **G** **Lord, have mercy.**
- L** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **G** **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE: *Glory to God in the Highest (The Song of the Angels)*

ELW Page 139

- L** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.
- G** **Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** 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.
- G** **Amen.**

LESSON: Philippians 4:4-7

—The Message

- L** Today's Lesson is from Paul's letter to the Philippian Christians, the fourth chapter.

Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him! Make it as clear as you can to all you meet that you're on their side, working with them and not against them. Help them see that the Master is about to arrive. He could show up any minute!

⁶⁻⁷Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life. will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- L** The word of the Lord. **G** **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: *He Came Down*

ELW Hymn 253

**He came down that we might have hope; He came down that we may have hope;
He came down that we might have hope; hallelujah forevermore.**

Text: Cameroon traditional Public Domain

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

—The Message

- P** The Holy Gospel according Luke, the third chapter. **G** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

When crowds of people came out for baptism because it was the popular thing to do, John exploded: "Brood of snakes! What do you think you're doing slithering down here to the river? Do you think a little water on your snakeskins is going to deflect God's judgment? It's your life that must change, not your skin. And don't think you can pull rank by claiming Abraham as 'father.' Being a child of Abraham is neither here nor there—children of Abraham are a dime a dozen. God can make children from stones if he wants. What counts is your life. Is it green and flourishing? Because if it's deadwood, it goes on the fire."

¹⁰The crowd asked him, "Then what are we supposed to do?"

¹¹"If you have two coats, give one away," he said. "Do the same with your food."

¹²Tax men also came to be baptized and said, "Teacher, what should we do?"

¹³He told them, "No more extortion—collect only what is required by law."

¹⁴Soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"



He told them, “No harassment, no blackmail—and be content with your rations.”

¹⁵The interest of the people by now was building. They were all beginning to wonder, “Could this John be the Messiah?”

¹⁶⁻¹⁷But John intervened: “I’m baptizing you here in the river. The main character in this drama, to whom I’m a mere stagehand, will ignite the kingdom life, a fire, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out. He’s going to clean house—make a clean sweep of your lives. He’ll place everything true in its proper place before God; everything false he’ll put out with the trash to be burned.”

¹⁸⁻²⁰There was a lot more of this—words that gave strength to the people, words that put heart in them. The Message! But Herod, the ruler, stung by John’s rebuke in the matter of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, capped his long string of evil deeds with this outrage: He put John in jail.

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

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Melissa Jacobson

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Hark! The Glad Sound*

ELW Hymn 239

- 1 **Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long;
let ev’ry heart prepare a throne and ev’ry voice a song.**
- 2 **He comes the pris’ners to release, in Satan’s bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.**
- 3 **He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace to enrich the humble poor.**

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751 Text is in Public Domain.

OUR PROFESSION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES’ CREED

☐ Let us confess our baptismal faith together.

- ☑ **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 CHURCH

When the petition concludes “Hear us, O God.” please respond, “your mercy is great.”

The prayers are ended with these words, “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.”

Please respond, “Amen.”

INVITATION TO OFFERING: *Link to give:* <https://coslutheran.org/give/>

THE 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. |
- ☐ 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: ▶



C Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow’r and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

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—ELW page 144

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P 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.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

C 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.

SHARING COMMUNION IN THE SANCTUARY OR WITH YOUR HOUSEHOLD AT HOME

*As the pastors and worshipers commune, please join them and the whole Church in the sanctuary or remotely by communing each other/yourself with these ancient words of promise:
“The body of Christ for you” and “The blood of Christ for you.”*

SONG DURING COMMUNION: *Lamb of God*

ELW page 146

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. [Please repeat this line.]
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

HYMN DURING COMMUNION: *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*

ELW Hymn 246

**1 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!”**
**3 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.**

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878

PASTORAL BLESSING and BENEDICTION

P The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait. **C Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*

ELW Hymn 244

**1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.**
**4 Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for, o’er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth’s redemption that sets your people free!**

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907

Text is in Public Domain.

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Invite all to join in connecting to Jesus’ pathway of joy and life. **C Thanks be to God.**

Tech Crew: Davida Kilgore, Dakota Atkins

Sanctuary Flowers are given to the glory of God by Kathie Manes, in memory of her husband John.