

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church

Peachtree City, Georgia

December 17, 2023

8:30 & 11:00 A.M.

Fritz Wiese, Senior Pastor Miriam Beecher, Pastor

Larry Peterson, Director of Worship and Music

☐ = Pastor ☒ = Lector [reader] ☑ Congregation *ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (red hymnal)*
↑ Please stand as you are able.

PRELUDE *(11:00) O Come, O Come Emmanuel, Lawrence Gee* *David Byers, euphonium*
 (11:00) Welcome To Our World, Rice/Schrader *David Beecher, Delee Rehak*

Welcome to worship! Today's worship includes the sacrament of communion. Communion is offered by intinction: you may receive a wafer and dip it in the chalice with wine or white grape juice. Or you may 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.

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Miriam

↑ **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: *A Flickering Candle***

**A flick'ring candle sheds its light In hope of dawn's victorious might,
And backward scurries cow'rdly night Reminded of the morning.
Watch, watch, for Christ is near, The promised Son of God most dear.
Hope, hope, His light will clear The shades of death and sin.**

**Though night is long, do not grow weak, To all who suffer, clearly speak:
"The Lord, the Savior whom you seek, Behold, is come among you!"
Watch, watch, for Christ is near, The promised Son of God most dear.
Hope, hope, His light will clear The shades of death and sin.**

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☒ Let us pray: Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow.
You bring water to parched ground and life out of death.
Bless us as this light grows,
and send sorrow and sighing to flee away.
Give us strength and patience,
trusting that you are true to your promises.
Transform the lives of all who suffer
with your wonders near at hand.

☑ **Amen.**

The third candle is lit.

↑ **GATHERING HYMN: *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn***

ELW Hymn 242

**1 Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heav'nly door and lives now inside us forever.**

**2 To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing,
his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;
music to heal the broken soul and hymns of lovingkindness,
the thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness.**

**3 In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing,
as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder,
the weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder.**

Hymn continues on the next page.

- 4 **Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;
may God fill ev'ry day we share and bring us at last into glory.**

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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↑ 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.**

↑ PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☞ Stir up the wills of 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.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4

see insert

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

see insert

↑ GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: *We Are Waiting for Jesus*

ACS Hymn 905

- 1 **We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.
Sun of justice, shine upon us; we are trusting in your promise.
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.**
- 2 **We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.
Loving Shepherd, walk beside us; stir our hearts, and gently guide us.
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.**

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957

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↑ GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-27

see insert

SERMON

Pastor Miriam

↑ HYMN OF THE DAY: *Drawn to the Light*

ELW Hymn 593

- 1 **People who walk in darkness have sought a light in the heart of the darkest night.
Just when we thought all would be lost, we were drawn to the light of God.**

Refrain

**Dawn is in sight! Gone is the night, drawn to the light and the morning.
Glorious and bright, oh, what a sight to be drawn to the light of God.**

- 2 **How can we tell a heaven from hell if ev'ryone dwells in the dark of night?
Morning dispels, gently compels, and we're drawn to the light of God. *Refrain***

- 3 **Where is the sun? Oh, there will be none! The Lamb is the one who is shining bright,
bids us to come! Life has begun when we're drawn to the light of God. *Refrain***

Text: John C. Ylvisaker, b. 1937

Text © 1990 John C. Ylvisaker.

↑ 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 “Merciful God,” please respond, “Receive our prayer.”
The prayers are ended with these words, “Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.” Please respond, “Amen.”*

↑ THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C And also with you.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Link to give: <https://coslutheran.org/give/>

We acknowledge that you may have already offered your gifts electronically or by mail. Thank you.



MUSICAL OFFERING (8:30) *Welcome To Our World, Rice/Schrader* David Beecher, Delee Rehak
(11:00) *Prepare Ye, Marc Robinson* Sanctuary Choir

↑ THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

- 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 to the Lord our God. **C** It is right to give our thanks and praise.
P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, ... 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 in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.
—ELW page 153

↑ WORDS OF INSTITUTION

↑ 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.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*Please approach the altar using the diagonal aisles and return by the side or middle aisles.
You will be offered a wafer, which you may dip in either the chalice of wine or the white grape juice.
You may also choose a packaged cup with wine or grape juice, or a gluten-free wafer with wine.*

- C** Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.
—ELW page 154

MUSICAL OFFERING *Night of Silence, Kantor/Ferguson*

David Beecher, Delee Rehak

COMMUNION HYMN: *He Came Down**ELW Hymn 253*

- 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.**
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light; 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.**

Text: Cameroon traditional
Text in the Public Domain.

† PASTORAL BLESSING and BENEDICTION

- ☞** The God of peace bless you,
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✝ remain upon you now and forever.
- ☞** Amen.

† SENDING HYMN: *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.**
- 4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace, your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav'n's eternal arches ring with your beloved name.**

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

† SENDING

- ☞** Go in peace. Keep awake. Invite all to join in connecting to Jesus' pathway of joy and life.
- ☞** Thanks be to God.

† POSTLUDE

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Altar Guild: Carol Talbot

*Advent Wreath lighting: (8:30)
(11:00)*

Lector: (8:30) Laura Musil (11:00) Miki Stork

Tech crew: (8:30) Davida Kilgore, Dakota Atkins

(11:00) Carol Jensen-Linton, Linda Volckmann, Brad McCumber

Usher: (8:30) Mark Barbour (11:00) Paul Talbot

Altar flowers given in honor of Jeanine's birthday by Kathie Manes

THE LESSONS

Sunday, December 17

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4

The Old Testament reading is from Isaiah, the 61st chapter.

¹The Spirit of the Lord, the Eternal, is on me. *The Lord has appointed me for a special purpose.* He has anointed me to bring good news to the oppressed poor.

He has sent me to repair broken hearts,
And to declare to those who are held captive and bound in prison,
“Be free *from your imprisonment!*”

²*He has sent me* to announce the year of jubilee, the season of the Eternal’s favor:
for our enemies it will be a day of God’s wrath;
For those who mourn it will be a *time of comfort.*

³As for those who grieve over Zion,
God has sent me to give them a *beautiful* crown in exchange for ashes,
To anoint them with gladness instead of sorrow,
to wrap them in *victory, joy, and praise* instead of depression and sadness.
People will call them *magnificent, like great towering trees* standing for what is right.
They stand to the glory of the Eternal who planted them.

⁴And they will rebuild *this place from* its ancient ruins;
they will restore the ages-old, *once-splendid* structures;
They will renew *Israel’s* ruined cities
from the ashes and debris that laid *untouched* for many generations.

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📖 The Word of the Lord. 🙏 Thanks be to God

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The New Testament reading is from 1st Thessalonians, the 5th chapter.

¹⁶Be joyful always, ¹⁷pray at all times, ¹⁸be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus.

¹⁹Do not restrain the Holy Spirit; ²⁰do not despise inspired messages. ²¹Put all things to the test: keep what is good ²²and avoid every kind of evil.

²³May the God who gives us peace make you holy in every way and keep your whole being—spirit, soul, and body—free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you will do it, because he is faithful.

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📖 The Word of the Lord. 🙏 Thanks be to God

Gospel is on the back

GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

📖 The Holy Gospel according to John, the 1st chapter. 🎵 **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁶ A man named John, who was sent by God, *was the first to clearly articulate the source of this Light.* ⁷ This *baptizer* put in plain words the *elusive mystery of the Divine Light* so all might believe through him. *Some wondered whether he might be the Light,* ⁸ but John was not the Light. He merely pointed to the Light.

.....

¹⁹ The reputation of John was *growing*; and many had questions, including Jewish religious leaders from Jerusalem. ²⁸ So some *priests and Levites* approached John in Bethany just beyond the Jordan River while he was baptizing *and bombarded him with questions:*

Religious Leaders: Who are you?

John the Baptist: ²⁰ I'm not the Anointed One, *if that is what you are asking.*

Religious Leaders: ²¹ *Your words sound familiar, like a prophet's.* Is that how we should address you? Are you the Prophet Elijah?

John the Baptist: No, I am not Elijah.

Religious Leaders: Are you the Prophet *Moses told us would come?*

John the Baptist: No.

Religious Leaders: ²² Then tell us who you are and what you are about because everyone is asking us, *especially the Pharisees,* and we must prepare an answer.

²³ John replied with the words of Isaiah the prophet:

John the Baptist: *Listen!* I am a voice calling out in the wilderness.

Straighten out the road for the Lord. He's on His way.

²⁴⁻²⁵ Then some of those sent by the Pharisees questioned him again.

Religious Leaders: How can you *travel the countryside* baptizing people if you are not the Anointed One or Elijah or the Prophet?

John the Baptist: ²⁶ Baptizing with water is what I do; but the One *whom I speak of, whom we all await,* is standing among you; and you have no idea who He is. ²⁷ Though He comes after me, I am not even worthy to unlace His sandals.

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