



December 17, 2023

The Third Sunday in Advent

Rev. Ken Bersche

*Janis Lapham, Organist
Maggie Kent, Secretary*

Prelude

Processional Hymn *Please Stand*

“Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng”

♪ Rejoice, O pilgrim throng! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing;
Your festal banner wave on high, The cross of Christ your king.
~Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

♪ With voice as full and strong As ocean’s surging praise,
Send forth the sturdy hymns of old, The psalms of ancient days. ~Rejoice...

♪ With all the angel choirs, With all the saints on earth
Pour out the strains of joy and bliss, True rapture, noblest mirth. ~Rejoice...

♪ Yet on and onward still, With hymn and chant and song,
Through gate and porch and columned aisle The hallowed pathways throng. ~Rejoice...

♪ Still lift your standard high, Still march in firm array,
As pilgrims through the darkness wend Till dawns the golden day. ~Rejoice...

♪ At last the march shall end; The wearied ones shall rest;
The pilgrims find their home at last, Jerusalem the blest. ~Rejoice...

♪ Praise Him who reigns on high, The Lord whom we adore:
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God forevermore. ~Rejoice....

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 813 -Text: Edward H. Plumptre 1821-91; Tune: Arthur H. Messiter 1834-1916;
Setting: Service Book and Hymnal 1958; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.*

Invocation

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song for He has done marvelous things!

His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.

The LORD has made known His salvation;

He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth

Break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,

With the lyre and the sound of melody!

With trumpets and the sound of the horn

Make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

The world and those who dwell in it!

Let the rivers clap their hands;

Let the hills sing for joy together

Before the LORD, for He comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Psalm 98

Matthew 28:19b

Confession and Absolution

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

A Time of Silence

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers. Embolden our witness to the true light that overcomes our darkness; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Hymn of Praise *Please Be Seated*

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

♪ Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

~Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo. Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo.

♪ Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song? ~Glo-ria...

♪ Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. ~Glo-ria....

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 368-Text: French, tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, London 1862
Tune: French, setting: Edward S. Barnes 1887-1958; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11

¹The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;

he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God;

to comfort all who mourn;
³to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.
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 wrong;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹Their offspring shall be known among the nations,
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.
¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul 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 like a priest with a beautiful headdress,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.
This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

¹⁶Rejoice 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 prophecies, ²¹but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.
²³Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.
This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

“The Advent of Our King”

♪ The advent of our King Our prayers must now employ,
And we must hymns of welcome sing In strains of holy joy.

♪ The everlasting Son Incarnate deigns to be,
Himself a servant’s form puts on To set His servants free.

♪ O Zion’s daughter, rise To meet your lowly King,
Nor let your faithless heart despise The peace He comes to bring.

♪ As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come again
And His true members all unite With Him in heav’n to reign.

♪ Before the dawning day Let sin’s dark deeds be gone,
The sinful self be put away, The new self now put on.

Please Stand

♪ All glory to the Son, Who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever one Through all eternity.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 331-Text: Charles Coffin 1676-1749; tr. John Chandler 1800-76; Tune: Aaron Williams 1731-76;
Setting: The Lutheran Hymnal 1941; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.*

Holy Gospel

John 1:6–8, 19–28

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

Glory to You, O Lord.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

¹⁹And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” ²²So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” ²⁸These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

Children’s Message *Please Be Seated*

The Hymn

“Joy to the World”

♪ 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.

♪ Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

♪ No more let sins and sorrows grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.

♪ 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.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 387-Text: Isaac Watts 1674-1748; Tune: George Frideric Handel 1685-1759;
Setting: Lowell Mason 1792-1872; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.*

Proclamation of the Word

“Rejoice”

Psalm 98:1–9

Offering and Musical Offering

Installation of Officers for 2024

Preface

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Colossians 3:1

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Psalm 136

Proper Preface

Sanctus Hymn *Music: “Away in a Manger,” Hymn 364*

♪ Holy, holy, holy Lord God, Almighty. The earth and the heavens all magnify Thee.

Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest praise, O blessed is He that comes in Your great name.

Words of Our Lord

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Lord’s Prayer

Agnus Dei Hymn *Music: “Away in a Manger,” Hymn 364*

♪ O Jesus, our Savior, the true Lamb of God; Forgiveness in Your name, have mercy on us.

O Jesus, our Savior, the true Lamb of God, Give peace to Your people, have mercy on us.

Distribution Hymns

“Now Sing We, Now, Rejoice”

♪ Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heav’n our voice; He from whom joy streameth
Poor in a manger lies; Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

♪ Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to Thee. Cheer my wearied spirit,
O pure and holy Child; Through Thy grace and merit, Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!

♪ Now through His Son doth shine The Father’s grace divine. Death was reigning o’er us
Through sin and vanity Till He opened for us A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

♪ Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav’nly ground? Where the angels singing
With all His saints unite, Sweetest praises bringing In heav’nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 386-Text: Latin and German 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell 1806-74; Tune: German;
Setting: Richard W. Hillert b.1923; ©1969 Concordia Publishing House; Used by permission; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” (vv. 1–6)

- ♪ “From heav’n above to earth I come To bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring, Whereof I now will say and sing:
- ♪ “To you this night is born a child Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth Shall be the joy of all the earth.
- ♪ “This is the Christ, our God Most High, Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be From all your sins to set you free.
- ♪ “He will on you the gifts bestow Prepared by God for all below,
That in His kingdom, bright and fair, You may with us His glory share.
- ♪ “These are the signs that you shall mark: The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid By whom the heav’ns and earth were made.”
- ♪ How glad we’ll be to find it so! Then with the shepherds let us go
To see what God for us has done In sending us His own dear Son.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 358-Text: Martin Luther 1483-1546, tr. Catherine Winkworth 1827-78
Tune: Geistliche lieder, Leipzig 1539, Setting: The Lutheran Hymnal 1941; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.*

Prayer of the Church *Please Stand*

Each petition is concluded with the following:

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song

For He has done marvelous things!

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

Numbers 6:24–26

Amen.

Recessional Hymn *Please Be Seated*

“What Child Is This”

- ♪ What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!
- ♪ Why lies He in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!
- ♪ So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 370-Text: William C. Dix 1837-98; Tune: English 16th cent.;
Setting: John Stainer 1840-1901; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.*

Postlude