

TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
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THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT
December 15, 2024 8:00 AM

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand

INVOCATION

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

People: **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

John 1:5, 9; 15:10–11; Psalm 100:1–5

Pastor: We light the third Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh, and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

People: **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Pastor: Sometimes the third Advent candle is pink and has been known as the shepherd candle or the candle of joy. The third Sunday of Advent is known also as Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete* in Latin means “rejoice,” as found in Philippians 4:4. We find our joy in Christ this season and always as we prepare to celebrate His birth. Jesus affirms the joy found only in Him as we remain connected to Him: “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

People: **The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.**

Pastor: Guided by the light of joy, we respond with the psalmist: “Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!

People: **Know that the LORD, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.**

Pastor: Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise!

People: **Give thanks to Him; bless His name!**

Pastor: For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever,

People: **and His faithfulness to all generations.”**

Three Advent candles are lit.

Please sit

HYMN “Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come” LSB 350, sts. 1-4

Please stand

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Philippians 4:4-7*

Pastor: As we gather today to hear God’s Word and call upon Him in prayer and praise, we come before Him as people who are broken by an imperfect world, burdened by sin, and bearing guilt for the things we have done and the things we have left undone. In the midst of our condition, the Word of God speaks to us. In today’s Epistle, we hear, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.”

People: **We confess we do not rejoice in everything; instead, we let the weight of this world bring us down. Instead of seeing all good things from Your hand, at times we focus on that which does not give You glory nor bring lasting joy to our lives.**

Pastor: “Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.”

People: **We confess we have at times been unreasonable in our relationships with others and in our relationship with You. Our witness to Your grace has faltered.**

Pastor: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

People: **We confess we have been anxious about our sin and our circumstances of life. Create in us a clean heart and renew in us a right spirit that we may abide in Your love and that Your joy may be in us, and our joy may be full.**

Pastor: 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 the Word, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

People: **Amen.**



Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

INTROIT *Psalm 146:5–8; antiphon: Philippians 4:4*

Pastor: Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.

**People: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD his God,
who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,
who keeps faith forever;**

Pastor: who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.
The LORD sets the prisoners free;
the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
the LORD loves the righteous.

**People: Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

**Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.**

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.
Into the darkness, You bring light, and into our lives, You bring lasting joy.

**People: Fill us with Your Spirit that we may rightly prepare and welcome the
Savior promised and born for us, that in Him, Your joy may be known,
and our joy may be complete;**

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Please sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Zephaniah 3:14–20*

(The joy and restoration of God's people)

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! ¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. ¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. ¹⁸I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will

no longer suffer reproach. ¹⁹Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. 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 in, at the time when I gather you together; 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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.**PSALM *Psalm 85***

P: ¹LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

C: ²You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin.

P: ³You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.

C: ⁴Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!

P: ⁵Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

C: ⁶Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?

P: ⁷Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.

C: ⁸Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

P: ⁹Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

C: ¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

P: ¹¹Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky.

(continued...)

C: ¹²Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

P: ¹³Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

EPISTLE *Philippians 4:4–7* (Joy in and through Christ)

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious 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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns” *LSB* 348, sts. 1-5

(Please stand)

VERSE *Matthew 11:10b*

Pastor: Alleluia. Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,

People: **who will prepare Your way before You. Alleluia.**

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 7:18–28* (Messengers from John the Baptist)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the seventh chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”

²⁰And when the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’” ²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits,

and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their

sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

²⁴When John’s messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing?

(continued...)

Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you."

²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.

Please sit

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding" *LSB 345, sts.1-5*
(sung to the tune of *LSB 691*)

SERMON "TURN FROM EVIL AND BEAR GOOD FRUIT" *Matthew 3:8*
The Rev. Peter Gueldner

Please stand

CREED *Apostles' Creed*

**People: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Please sit

TITHES AND OFFERING "He Is Born" *Trinity Handbells*

Please stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH *Philippians 4:4*

Pastor: Let us pray for the church, for the people of God, and for all people according to their needs.

We praise You, O Lord, for the joys You have given us in this life. For each day You grant us in this life, we rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For the opportunities You give us to share Your Word to children, family, friends, neighbors, and communities, and for the privilege we carry to model Your love and to give a reason for the hope that we have, we rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For those who face their days with struggle and sorrows, especially those who ask for our prayers, [*including . . .*], that even though in this world we have trouble, we take heart that Christ has overcome the world. We rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For those who serve our nation here and across the world in the armed forces, for those who keep our community safe through law and order, for those You use to make people well in times of physical and mental distress, and for all vocations in which the gifts and abilities You have given are used on behalf of others, we rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For the uniqueness of the season of this wintertime, for the blessing of this Advent season of the Church Year as we prepare to welcome again the Savior sent and born for us, and for Your presence and blessings freely given to Your people each and every season, we rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

Pastor: Together let us pray as our Lord Jesus taught us...

People: 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.

CLOSING SENTENCES *John 1:5, 9*

Pastor: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

People: **The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: 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.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: Rejoice! . . . Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. The blessing of almighty God—the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit—be with you.

Philippians 4:4, 6–7

People: **Amen.**

Please sit

HYMN **“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”** *LSB 802, sts. 1-4*

*** * * TO GOD BE THE GLORY * * ***

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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