

Sunday, December 13, 2020 - Third Sunday of Advent

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving and forgiving God,

we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another.

Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ.

Amen.

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free - free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, † comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: "Low How a Rose E'er Blooming" WHM 136 v. 1 & 2

1. Lo how a Rose e'er blooming, From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming As men of old have sung.
It came a flower bright, Amid the cold of winter, When half gone was the night'
2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The Rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright She bore to men a Savior, When half-spent was the night.

Kyrie: The response to the petitions of the Kyrie is: **Lord, have mercy.**

"The Advent Wreath" Candle 3 & Prayer (*Read by Worship Assistant*)

The third week of Advent we remember the gift of Joy we have in Christ. We remember the joy that Mary felt when the angel Gabriel told her that a special child would be born to her - a child who would save and deliver all people. Joy is the gift we all receive from the unconditional love Christ has for us. God wants us all to have joy. The angel who announced to the shepherds that Jesus had been born told them: "Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people - for to you is born this day, in the City of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." As we light this candle, we remember that Christ came to bring true and everlasting joy to all people. As we light this candle, we are reminded that Christ came to save all people, Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us. Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming by helping us see that Christ came for every person we meet wherever we go. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Candle (Congregation sings "Emmanuel" [Bob McGee] as candle is lit)

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; 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, 8-11 (*Read by Worship Assistant*)

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,

to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
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 wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being 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 with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Psalm: Psalm 126 (*Read together*)

¹**When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.**
²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."**
³**The LORD has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.**
⁴**Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses of the Negeb. R**
⁵**Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.**
⁶**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 (*Read by Worship Assistant*)

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 the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything;

hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Gospel: Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ And his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

⁵² he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

Sermon

Hymn – “My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness” WOV 730 vs. 1 & 3

1 My soul proclaims your greatness, Lord; I sing my Savior's praise!
You looked upon my lowliness, and I am full of grace.
Now ev'ry land and ev'ry age this blessing shall proclaim—
great wonders you have done for me, and holy is your name.

3 To Israel, your servant blest, your help is ever sure;
the promise to our parents made their children will secure.
Sing glory to the Holy One, give honor to the Word,
and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all adored.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, He will come again 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.

Sharing of the Peace (nods, waves, “air hugs” to each other, only)

Prayers of Intercession (*Beginning read by Worship Assistant*)

God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news.

Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship (*the congregation's worship leaders may be named*). Embed your word in their hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of every living creature, you announce the year of your favor for all of creation. Extend your kindness and relief to endangered animals and plants. Strengthen the human beings who rely on the rhythms of nature to make their living. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through their actions. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing. We ask for healing for those who are suffering especially Dan, Julie, Nancy, Hank & Marie, Melissa, Rick, and others we name out loud here or wherever we are listening Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant love. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered. (By you and/or worship assistant)

(Pastor): Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

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.

Blessing

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ✠ now and forever. **Amen.**

Sending Song: "Joy Has Dawned" (praise song) vs.1 & 4

1. Joy has dawned upon the world Promised from creation,
salvation now unfurled. Hope for ev'ry nation.
Not with fanfares from above, Not with scenes of glory,
But a humble gift of love. Jesus born of Mary
4. Son of Adam Son of heaven, Given as a ransom
Reconciling God and man. Christ our mighty Champion.
What a Savior what a Friend. What a glorious mystery.
Once a babe in Bethlehem, Now the Lord of history

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude "Mary Had a Baby"?