



GRACE LUTHERAN

CHURCH • SCHOOL



Third
Sunday *of* Advent

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 10, 2022 - 5:00 PM
DECEMBER 11, 2022 - 10:45 AM

“Prepare a Highway!”

*In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together.
(Isaiah 40:3-5, NIV)*

*(The * indicates when the congregation is to stand.)*

PRELUDE

WELCOME

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN** *“Arise, O Christian People”* *Hymn 354*
([10:45] Stand and face the cross as it enters the Sanctuary.)

**Arise, O Christian people! Prepare yourselves today;
Prepare to greet the Savior, Who takes your sins away.
To us by grace alone The truth and light were given;
The promised Lord from heaven To all the world is shown.**

**Prepare the way before Him; Prepare for Him the best.
Cast out what would offend Him, This great, this heav’nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way: The lowly valleys raising,
The heights of pride abasing, His path all even lay.**

**The humble heart and lowly God raises up on high;
Beneath His feet in terror The haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right, That heeds God’s invitation
And makes true preparation— It is the Lord’s delight.**

**Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus; Turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive You This blessed Adventtide.
From stall and manger low Come now to dwell within me;
I’ll sing Your praises gladly And forth Your glory show.**

***THE INVOCATION, CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Leader: During this holy season of Advent, ancient Christians gathered for special times of worship to renounce their sins and call upon the Son of God to return. They took to heart the promised titles of the coming Messiah in the Old Testament, set them to music and called upon Christ to come again, delivering them once and for all to Himself. In that same spirit, we take time in our worship this morning to renounce our sins and call upon our Savior to come and deliver us. I invite you to kneel as we sing the ancient words of advent and confess our sins to our coming Savior.

(Please kneel or be seated.)

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**O come, Messiah, come again, And rid the world of death and sin.
Return Thou risen Savior and King, That heav'n and earth at last may sing
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Silence for personal confession

Leader: Gracious Savior,

People: We confess that our lives are filled with sin and our land is captive to death. We have given in to temptation and brought misery upon ourselves. We need You to continually come among us with Your grace and with Your life. Forgive us of our sins, restore our broken relationships, fill us with Your Spirit and heal our land. For we desire to sing Your praises today and everyday. In the good news of Christ's death and resurrection, set us free and come again to bring us home to You. Amen.

Leader: Friends in Christ, I have good news for you! Your Savior has indeed come to this earth. Not only did He live a perfect life in your place, but He also died on the cross for all of your sins. Risen from the dead, He brings His grace to you and pours out His Spirit upon you. He leads you in holy living to keep you blameless and hopeful until He comes again in glory. As a servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen!

(Please stand)

**O come, Desire of Nations bind In one the hearts of all mankind
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

***THE SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, Your kingdom is everlasting and Your promises are sure. Grant us grace to live with unfailing confidence, knowing that You will bring about that time when all of Your enemies are defeated and all of creation truly is at peace. This we ask for the sake of Jesus, our Savior and our King.

People: **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knee. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE SECOND READING

James 5:7-11

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*THE HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-15

Pastor: The Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

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

²Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ⁴And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me." ⁷As they went away, 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? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written, "'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'" ¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

[10:45] CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND DISMISSAL TO CHILDREN'S CHURCH

***SERMON HYMN**

“What Hope! An Eden Prophesied”

Hymn 342

**What hope! An Eden prophesied Where tame live with the wild;
The lamb and lion side by side, Led by a little child!**

**A shoot will sprout from Jesse's stem, A branch from David's line,
A Prince of Peace in Bethlehem: The fruit of God's design.**

**As banner of God's love unfurled, Christ came to suffer loss,
That by His death a dying world Would rally to the cross.**

**Come, Jesus, come, Messiah Lord, Lost Paradise restore;
Lead past the angel's flaming sword— Come, open heaven's door.**

THE SERMON

“Holy Highway!”

Isaiah 35 & 40

***THE CONFESSION OF FAITH - THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**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.

***PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

***HOLY COMMUNION**

***WORDS OF PREPARATION**

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

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Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

***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.

***AGNUS DEI**

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Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

MUSIC DURING THE DISTRIBUTION

“Hark, the Glad Sound”

Hymn 349

**Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev’ry heart prepare a throne
And ev’ry voice a song.**

**He comes the pris’ners to release,
In Satan’s bondage held.
The gates of brass before Him burst,
The iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace
To enrich the humble poor.**

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring
With Thy belovèd name.**

"A Great and Mighty Wonder"

Hymn 383

**A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant
With virgin honor pure!**

Refrain

**Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"**

**The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky. Refrain**

**While thus they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, O vales and mountains,
And oceans, clap your hands. Refrain.**

**Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The infant born in Beth'lem,
The Savior and the Lord. Refrain.**

**All idols then shall perish
And Satan's lying cease,
And Christ shall raise His scepter,
Decreeing endless peace. Refrain.**

"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

Hymn 344

**On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;
Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.**

**We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord,
Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away
Like flow'rs that wither and decay.**

**Lay on the sick Thy healing hand
And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face
Till beauty springs in ev'ry place.**

**All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
Whose advent sets Thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit evermore.**

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

***THE BENEDICTION** (Numbers 6:24-26)

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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.

***RECESSIONAL HYMN** "Prepare the Royal Highway"

Hymn 343

**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!**

**God's people, see Him coming: Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you! *Refrain***

**Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him! All nations, now adore Him! *Refrain***

**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***

***DISMISSAL**

Pastor: Go in peace and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP SERVICE LEADERS

SATURDAY, 5:00 PM

The Officiant
The Organist
The Communion Deacons
The Lector
The Usher/Greeter Team

The Rev. Charles T. Reich
Kathy Schelp
Jackie Stine, Jan Struck
Mike Britt
Jim Campbell, Linda Davy

SUNDAY, 10:45 AM

The Preacher
The Celebrant
The Liturgist
The Organist
The Sound Technician
The Communion Deacons
The Elder on Duty
The Lectors
The Robing Leader
The Crucifer
The Acolytes
The Welcome Team Greeter
At the Welcome Center
The Welcome Team Ushers

The Rev. Charles T. Reich
The Rev. Brendon T. Moore
Vicar Sam Hoag
Kathy Schelp
Bruce Wales
Fred Aceto, Carl Locke, Bet Tucker
Janet Hostler
Keith Schelp, Janice Graydon
Dr. Julia King
Lilliann Witcher
Gavin King, Lauren King
Georgia Fisher
Jill Rogers
Dr. Ken Rogers, Barry Walker

CREDITS

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