

Welcome to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Building up God's people through His word for His world

Third Sunday of Advent
December 15, 2024

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

We especially welcome our guests who are worshipping here today. What a privilege to greet you! If you have no church home in the area, we invite you to participate in the life and ministry of Good Shepherd. For information about our congregation, visit gslcva.org. Also, please fill out a Welcome card, which you'll find near the hymnals, and place it in the offering plate.

Our worship reflects the liturgical tradition of the Christian church. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first, third, and fifth Sundays at 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. Our informal worship service features contemporary music and is held in the Fellowship Hall at 11:00 a.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, with communion celebrated on fourth Sundays.

To all worshippers: The presence of children in worship is a gift to the Body of Christ and a reminder that our congregation is growing. Remember that Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Please welcome our young ones and give their parents a smile of encouragement or a helping hand, if needed.

To the parents of young ones, here are a few suggestions for worshipping with your children: Relax! God put the wiggles and giggles in kids; don't feel that you have to suppress them in His house. All are welcome! Sit toward the front, where it is easier to see and hear what's going on. Quietly explain the parts of the worship service and actions of the pastor, ushers, communion assistants, etc. Sing the hymns and songs, pray, and voice the responses aloud. Children learn worshipful behavior by copying you. If you have to leave the worship service with your child or stand up and walk around the back of the sanctuary, feel free to do so, but please come back! And finally, if you so choose, . . .

You are welcome to use our nursery, as well as our parents' room next to the nursery, if your young ones need a break from the service. The Parents' Room is also a comfortable place where mothers may nurse their babies. The worship service is livestreamed to a monitor in the Parents' Room.

We offer Sunday School and a variety of Bible studies and spiritual growth opportunities for children, youth, and adults on Sunday mornings. All Sunday School classes meet at 9:30 a.m. See News and Announcements for class information.

Flowers and plants in our worship areas are supported by financial donations to the Flower Fund. These floral offerings beautify the church, uplift service participants, and remind us of God's good creation. You can find information about being a flower sponsor on the bulletin board near the Fellowship Hall and at gslcva.org (enter "flowers" in the search area on the homepage). Today's flowers are sponsored by Linda and Rob Fekete in honor of Alex's birthday.

Prelude (8:00)	“All Glory be to God on High”	Dudley Buck
Prelude (11:00)	“The Holly and the Ivy and the Cherry Tree Carol”	Alec Rowell
Welcome		Pastor James

Please stand

Opening Hymn	“Savior of the Nations, Come”	Hymn No. 332 Verses 1-4
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Invocation, Confession, and Forgiveness

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection on God’s word and for self-examination. You may kneel or remain standing.

P: God of mercy,

C: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P: God of might,

C: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

P: God in our midst,

C: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✠ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

C: Amen.

Please stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Kyrie [Lord, have mercy]	Music in hymnal, pages 152-53
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Salutation and Prayer of the Day	Music in hymnal, page 156
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P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Today, on the third Sunday of Advent, we light three candles on the Advent wreath. The wreath, as an unbroken circle, is an image of eternity. The wreath is also a reminder of the victory wreath, the crown of Christ. As we light the candles in the midst of growing darkness, we remember that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life.

P: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord. May he give water to all who thirst, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

C: **Amen.**

Please sit

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

L: ¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸ as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise

and renown in all the earth.
²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
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.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

L: ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand

Alleluia

Music in hymnal, page 156

Holy Gospel

Luke 3:7-18

P: The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the third chapter.

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

Music in hymnal, page 157

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

P: ⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount

prescribed for you.” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Music in hymnal, page 157

Please sit

Hymn of the Day “Savior of the Nations, Come”

Hymn No. 332

Verses 5-8

If you think your child might be unable to sit through the entire service, this would be an appropriate time to take him/her to the nursery.

Message “Practical Repentance”

Pastor Johann

Musical Reflection

Please stand

Nicene Creed

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.

Through Him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
 He has spoken through the prophets.
 We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
 We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.
 Amen.**

Please sit

Announcements

Pastor James

Please fill out a Welcome card and place it in the offering plate.

Anthem (8:00)

"The Holly and the Ivy and the Cherry Tree Carol"

Alec Rowell

"Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying"

Paul Manz

Anne Lee, organ

Anthem (11:00)

"See, amid the Winter's Snow"

arr. David Willcocks

Stephanie Batchelder, soprano; Kathy Otterbacher, mezzo soprano;

Eugene Stromecki, bass; Sanctuary Choir

See amid the winter's snow

Chorus

Born for us on earth below

As we watch'd at dead of night

See the tender Lamb appears

Lo we saw a wondrous light

Promis'd from eternal years

Angels singing Peace on earth

Told us of the Savior's birth

Chorus:

Hail thou ever blessed morn

Chorus

Hail, redemption's happy dawn

Sing through all Jerusalem

Sacred Infant, all divine

Christ is born in Bethlehem

What a tender love was thine

Lo within a manger lies

Thus to come from highest bliss

He who built the starry skies

Down to such a world as this

He who throned in height sublime

Chorus

Sits amid the cherubim

Teach, O teach us, Holy Child

Chorus

By thy face so meek and mild

Say ye holy shepherds say

Teach us to resemble thee

What your joyful news today

In thy sweet humility

Wherefore have ye left your sheep

Chorus

On the lonely mountain steep?

Please stand

Offertory Prayer

C: Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this

food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

At the end of each petition, the prayer leader will say, "Lord, in your mercy ..."

The congregation responds, "receive our prayer."

Please see the News and Announcements sheet for a listing of intercessions.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

Preface and Proper Preface

Music in hymnal, page 160

Sanctus [Holy, Holy, Holy]

Music in hymnal, page 161

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.**

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini [The peace of the Lord]

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Agnus Dei [Lamb of God]

Music in hymnal, page 163

Please sit

Distribution

We believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine, according to His Word: "This is My Body . . . this is My blood" (Matthew 26:26-27), and that in this sacrament our Lord gives us forgiveness of our sins, unity with God, and strength for a life of service.

We invite all baptized Christians who have made their First Communion, examined themselves, discern the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament for the forgiveness of their sins, and sincerely seek to amend their lives to join us at His Table.

Distribution procedure: Please come forward by the center aisle or as instructed by the usher. Fill the rail, beginning at the end near the wall. Kneel. Cup your hands to receive the bread. Then, take an individual cup from the tray as it is passed. **Cups in the innermost circle of the communion tray contain juice** for those who do not wish to drink wine. **For those who need gluten-free**

wafers: Bring with you one of the brightly colored pieces of paper from the pews and hand it to the communion assistant who is distributing the wafers. That person will bring a gluten-free wafer to you.

Return to your seat via the aisle next to the windows. Place your empty communion cup in the bowl near the end of the rail. If you are unable to walk to the communion rail, please speak to an usher, and we will bring the sacrament to you.

Distribution Hymns “Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord”
 “You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”

Hymn No. 637
Hymn No. 641

Please stand

Post-Communion Collect

P: Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

C: **Amen.**

Blessing

P: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, + bless and keep you now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Closing Hymn “How Great Thou Art”

Hymn No. 801

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude “Fanfare On Mendelssohn” (Hark! The Herald Angels Sing) Alec Wyton

As your schedule permits, please be seated during the postlude for a time of prayer and reflection.

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Please join us for coffee and conversation in the church entry area following the service.

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We hope you will continue to connect with us by liking our Facebook page and following us on Instagram. Find them by searching @gslcva on those platforms. We also encourage you to subscribe to our YouTube channel and follow us on Vimeo so that you don’t miss any of our virtual services, kids’ messages, and more. Questions? Contact Communications Director Jeff Donahue, jeff@gslcva.org

Serving Today

	8:00	11:00
Worship Leader	Pastor James	Pastor James
Preacher	Pastor Johann	Pastor Johann
Crucifer	Hugh Conschafter	EJ Hoplin
Acolyte	Andrew Misleh	Thatcher Hoplin
Scripture Reader	Kirsten Bates	Nancy McGarry
Prayer Leader	Henry Eickelberg	Jerry Johnson
Cantor	Anne Lee	Kathy Otterbacher
Communion Assistants	Pastor Johann (host) Pastor James (host) Walt Peter (tray) Melinda DeWan (tray)	Pastor Johann (host) Pastor James (host) Brian Vanderhoof (tray) Nancy McGarry(tray)
Ushers	Ric Nickerson (lead) Dean Thorsell Jim Christian Jamie Ellor	Paul Devine(lead) Jim Micsan Brian Cors *
Choir Director		Anne Lee
Organist	Anne Lee	Anne Lee
Altar Guild	Michelle Tenhaeff	Joey Tempel
Projectionist	Jeff Donahue	Jeff Donahue
Audio Engineer	Matt Hardy	Adam Sherman
Livestream Manager		Matt Hardy
Greeter	*(door) Deanine Thrash (welcome center)	Bill Ciesar (door) Dec Ciesar (door) June McGurn (welcome center)
Guest Welcome	*	Heidi Cooper
Engagement	Heidi Cooper	Heidi Cooper
Opener	Ric Nickerson	
Closer		Martin Farley
Coffee Setup	Drew Lipman	
Kitchen Cleanup		Jan Morgan

* = unfilled as of December 11

Board of Servant Leaders

Laura Blackburn, chair
Rob Fekete, vice-chair
Drew Lipman, secretary

Larry Austin
Paul Kasulis
Jennifer Pelletier
Deanine Thrash

Core Ministry Areas

Worship

Team Leaders: Georgia Thorstenson and Julie Schorfheide; Staff Liaison: Pastor Johann

The Worship Team encompasses music, seasonal celebrations, arts, worship schedule, Sanctuary Choir (Anne Lee), Handbell Choir (Anne Lee), traditional worship, and contemporary worship (Matt Hardy), the worship spaces, and support personnel (e.g., ushers, greeters, acolytes).

Discipleship

Team Leader: Pastor James

The Discipleship Team oversees adult education, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, children's ministry (Michelle Tenhaeff), and youth ministry (Holly Vanderhoof).

Parish Life

Team Leader: Brian Cors; Staff Liaison: Heidi Cooper

The Parish Life Team helps foster our community through Life Groups, member engagement, fellowship events, new member inclusion, concerts, public events, picnics, and intergenerational events, and reaches out to guests who worship at Good Shepherd.

Mission

Team Leader: Pastor Johann

Through this core ministry area, Good Shepherd supports a variety of mission efforts: financial and prayerful partnering with missionaries, worldwide and local (Bill and Lisa Schuler); synod/district, social ministry, and community service (Holly Vanderhoof); evangelism, publicity, media, and social media (Jeff Donahue).

Congregational Care and Nurture

Team Leader: June McGurn; Staff Liaison: Pastor Johann

The Congregational Care and Nurture Team helps support the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health of the congregation through literature, programs, and opportunities to serve others at Good Shepherd. This ministry's volunteers help in many ways: at memorial services and receptions; through member care visits and transportation; by sending cards for life events; and by arranging meals ("Take Them a Meal" team) for the sick and infirm, for their families, and for families with newborns.

Administration

Team Leader: Pastor Johann

This team is in charge of property and contracts (Roger Thorstenson), financing the mission (Mike DeWan), stewardship (Don Kidwell), human resources/personnel (Matt Frankner), communications (Jeff Donahue), and technology (Gary Budzier).

Good Shepherd's Staff

Jotham Johann, Senior Pastor

Room 201; pastorjo@gslcva.org; 703-439-2754

Gary James, Assisting Pastor

Room 209; pastorgary@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020

Sarah Brazell, Preschool Director

Room 101; preschool@gslcva.org; 703-437-4511

Georgia Thorstenson, Business Manager

Room 212; georgia@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020 x803

Jeff Donahue, Communications Director

Room 209; jeff@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020 x811

Heidi Cooper, Director of Engagement

heidi@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020

Anne Lee, Organist & Director of Choirs

Room 215; anne@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020 x807

Michele Clair, Administrative Assistant

Room 210; michele@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020 x806

Holly Vanderhoof, Community Service Coordinator & Youth Ministry Director

Room 208; holly@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020 x213

Matt Hardy, Praise Band Director & Video Production Specialist

matt@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020

Michelle Tenhaeff, Children's Ministry Coordinator

childministry@gslcva.org; 703-437-5020

Reid Otterbacher, Communications Assistant

commassist@gslcva.org

Chloe Vanderhoof, Social Media Assistant

chloe@gslcva.org

Please note that the church office is closed on Mondays.

Good Shepherd is a member congregation of the Southeastern District
of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod