

Welcome to worship at Faith Lutheran Church

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 13, 2020

Worship Service

Print = Pastor or Worship Leader

Bold = Congregation



"Rejoice always," begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. "All God's children got a robe," go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God's party.

GATHERING

GATHERING HYMN:

Christ, Be Our Light

ELW 715

Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for
truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
your holy people, light for the world to see.

[Refrain]

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the
darkness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your
church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for
hope, many despair. Your word alone
has pow'r to save us. Make us your living voice.

[Refrain]

Longing for food, many are hungry. Longing for
water, many still thirst. Make us your bread,
broken for others, shared until all are fed.

[Refrain]

Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth,
many are cold. Make us your building,
sheltering others, walls made of living stone.

[Refrain]

Many the gifts, many the people, many the
hearts that yearn to belong. Let us be servants
to one another, making your kingdom come.

[Refrain]



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.

GREETING

The Spirit and the Church cry out:

Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

All those who await his appearance pray:

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

The whole creation pleads:

Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory

ELW 561

Joyous light of heavenly glory, loving glow of God's own face,
You who sing creation's story, shine on every land and race.
Now as morning swirls around us, we shall raise our songs to you,
God of day bread, God of shadows, come and light our hearts a new.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together the prayer of the day:

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

ADVENT HYMN

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah ELW 240 v.1,2,3

Light one candle to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He shall bring salvation to Israel; God fulfills the promise.

Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.

Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.



CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

WORD

The First Lesson is from Isaiah in the 61st chapter.

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 OT page #767

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

- 1 The 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;
- 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
- 3 to 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.
- 4 They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
- 8 For 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.
- 9 Their 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.
- 10 I 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.

11 For 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The psalm for today is **Psalm 126** will you please read it responsively with me.

The LORD has done great things for us. (Ps. 126:3)

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.

**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."**

The LORD has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.

**Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.**

Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.

**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

The Second Lesson is from the 5th chapter of I Thessalonians.

I Thessalonians 5:16-24 NT page #219

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise the words of prophets, 21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. 23 May 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. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Alleluia.
Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

The Holy Gospel according to the 1st chapter of John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John 1:6-8, 19-28 NT page #94

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 19This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." 21And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." 22Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for 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.24Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. 25They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

26John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, 27the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." 28This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY:

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

ELW 249

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces
that the Lord is nigh; awake and harken,
for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every 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 you as our Savior, Lord, our refuge
and our great reward; without your grace we
waste away like flowers that wither and decay.

Stretch forth your hand, our health restore, and make us
rise to fall no more. O let your face upon
us shine and fill the world with love divine
All praise to you, eternal Son, whose advent
has our freedom won, whom with the Father
we adore, and Holy Spirit, evermore.

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.



EUCARISTIC PRAYER

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray,
**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.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious and abundant God,
you have done great things for us, and we rejoice.
In this bread and cup, you give us life forever.
In your boundless mercy, strengthen us
and open our hearts to the world's needs,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
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 HYMN:

Light Dawns on a Weary World

ELW 726

Light dawns on a weary world When eyes begin to
see all people's dignity. Light dawn on a
weary world: The promised day to justice comes.

[Refrain]

The trees shall clap their hands; The dry lands, gush with spring;
The hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out with joy, and be led forth in peace,
As all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

Love grows in a weary world When hungry hearts find
bread and children's dreams are fed. Love grows in a
weary world; the promised feast of plenty comes.

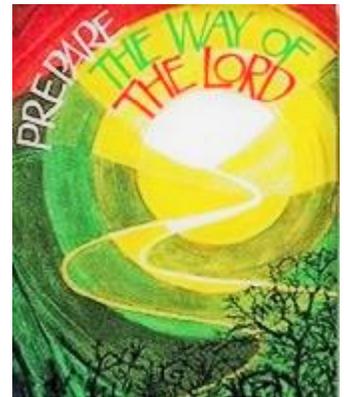
[Refrain]

Hope blooms in a weary world when creatures, once forlorn
Find wilderness reborn. Hope looms in a
Weary world; the promised green of Eden comes.

[Refrain]

DISMISSAL

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



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