



**MESSIAH EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH**
“Celebrating the Messiah for 25 years”

Third Sunday in Advent

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Today we also light the third candle of our Advent wreath, the shepherd’s candle. It’s pink, a color that traditionally represented joy. It reminds us of the joy of finding the Christ child and witnessing of this joy to others. The shepherd’s candle symbolizes **joy**.

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

Response: **Amen.**

Pastor: We are in the presence of God, who has created us to love and serve Him as His dear children. But we have disobeyed Him and deserve only His wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to Him and plead for His mercy.

Response: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against You and do not deserve to be called Your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to Your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

Pastor: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, He has removed your guilt forever. You are His own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to His will.

Response: **Amen.**

Pastor: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Response: (spoken)

**Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Blessed are they who take refuge in Him.
Your Word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.
Your faithfulness continues forever.
Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Blessed are they who take refuge in Him.**

Pastor: Let us pray.
Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of Your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts and fill us with Your light; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever,

Response: **Amen.**

First Lesson: Isaiah 61:1-3, 10,11

61 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for 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 and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of

righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

¹⁰ I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶ Be joyful always; ¹⁷ pray continually; ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹ Do not put out the Spirit's fire; ²⁰ do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹ Test everything. Hold on to the good. ²² Avoid every kind of evil. ²³ May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it

Verse of the Day

Gospel Lesson: John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶ There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

¹⁹ Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰ He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ." ²¹ They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." ²² Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³ John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of

one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" ²⁴
Now some Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵ questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶ "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸
This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Hymn: "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You" CW 19

1. O Lord, how shall I meet you, How welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you, My Hope, my heart's Delight.
O Jesus, let your word be A lamp to light my way,
To show me how to please you, To guide me ev'ry day.
3. Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted, Who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed And tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you, He's standing at the door
Who best can help and cheer you And bids you weep no more.

Today's message: based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

"BELIEVERS ARE DIFFERENT"

- I. The Holy Spirit changes our attitude
- II. The Holy Spirit changes our actions

Confession of faith: Apostles' Creed

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

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

Prayer:

We come before Your throne with our hearts and voices raised in praise. From the beginning of creation, You have always shown Your love and concern for the human race. In spite of the sin that Adam ushered into this world, You loved us enough to send a Savior from sin. For all Your love, concern and grace, we praise You from our inmost depths.

As we approach the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, open our eyes to see the Holy Spirit at work within us. Through the Word that we hear and read, He motivates us to live for You. The God-pleasing choices that we make, the concern and love we have for our fellow human beings, our focus on God's love for us - all these are the result of the Holy Spirit at work within our hearts.

O Lord, open our eyes to see the opportunities You have prepared for us to say thanks in our words and actions. Move us to tell others about the Christchild. May our feet be the ones that bring good news. Move us to bind up the brokenhearted, comfort those who mourn, and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Move us to offer our shoulders and time to those who grieve and need our support. Motivate us to love others as You have loved us - unconditionally and consistently. In all our efforts to live for You, we see the Holy Spirit at work within us. To God be all the credit and glory, for He is working through us.

Watch over the people we now bring to You in our private prayers, and give them an end to their suffering.

(Silent prayer)

In Jesus' name we join in the prayer He taught us - **“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.”**

Ending prayer:

Pastor: O Lord God, heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us strong in Your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us Your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Response: **Amen.**

Pastor: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another, and serve the Lord with gladness. The Lord bless and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

Response: **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OUR SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY continues at 9:00am. Come join us in person or online. If you would like copies of the lessons emailed to you, please email to pastorsauer@messiahgb.org.

DAILY BIBLE READING JOURNAL for a three-year reading plan will be available to the congregation in mid-December. There is no cost to the journal. For more information and to sign up for a copy, visit the link on the home page of our website. Contact us if you have any questions. God bless your growth in God's Word!

MUSICALLY BLESSED? We are looking for volunteers within the church who would like to share their musical talents with the congregation, whether that be vocally or instrumentally. With COVID-19 in mind, we are trying to come up with ways for everyone to contribute to fellowship and worship while remaining safe! If you are interested please contact Katie Christensen at 920-217-6762 or email at Kaitlyn.christensen95@gmail.com.

YARD SIGNS AND CHRISTMAS INVITATIONS are available in the back of church as you leave this morning. Invite your family and friends to Christmas at Messiah - in person or to tune in online. Share the good news of the Savior

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Due to family circumstances and health, we are currently in need of volunteers to serve the Lord here at Messiah on our Elders committee, early service usher and communion set up teams. If you are interested in serving, please contact Pastor at 465-6013 or pastorsauer@messiahgb.org. Thanks!

FAMILY SUNDAY SCHOOL Parents and kids alike are invited to join this morning and on December 20th at 9:15 am in the Activity Hall. We'll study the Bible lesson for the day and do an activity. Families are able to sit together at their own table. Hope to see you there!

VIDEO CAMERA OPERATORS NEEDED If you would like to volunteer to serve the Lord in this way, please contact one of your pastors. Training will be provided.

Activities next week:

Monday 6:00: Bible information class
Wednesday 5:30: Catechism class
Thursday 6:30: Worship w/ Communion
Sunday 7:45 & 10:15: Worship service w/Communion
9:00: Bible class - *"Fruit of the Spirit"*
9:15 Family Sunday School

Our Response to God's Gifts:

Attendance this past week:

Thursday 6:30 - 28
Sunday 7:45 - 57
9:30 - 72 Total: 157

Offerings \$9,679.50

Serving today in the Lord's house:

Usher team: 7:45: Team #1 Gary DeKeyser's team
10:15: Team #6 Greg Dessart's team

Serving next week in the Lord's house:

Usher team: 7:45: Team #3 John Anderegg's team
10:15: Team #8 Steve Popke's's team