

# **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

December 14, 2025

***Please respect the sanctity of worship and turn off all cell phones.  
Thank you.***

## **For the Gathered**

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

## **Light Third Advent Wreath Candle**

### **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – ELW 257** **(vs. 1, 2, & 3)**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

#### *Refrain*

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain*

O come, O come, O Lord of might,  
as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. *Refrain*

## **Greeting – ELW 147**

(Pastor) - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**(All) - And also with you.**

*(All who are able may stand.)*

## **Gathering Song – Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming – ELW 272 (1, 2, & 4)**

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming  
from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming  
as seers of old have sung,  
it came, a flow'r so bright,  
amid the cold of winter,  
when half-spent was the night.

Isaiah had 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 us a Savior,  
when half-spent was the night.

O Savior, child of Mary,  
who felt our human woe;  
O Savior, king of glory,  
who dost our weakness know:  
bring us at length, we pray,  
to the bright courts of heaven  
and into endless day.

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851-1934, sts. 1-2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845-1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876-1948, st. 4

## **Confession and Forgiveness – ELW 95**

(Pastor)

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

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

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

## **Kyrie – Gift of God**

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

Word of mercy, word of justice:

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

Word of prophets, word of people:

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

Holy Word of God made flesh.

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

In the stillness of the nightfall:

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

In the stillness of the heartbeat:

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

In the silence, you are here.

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

You are bread for all who hunger:

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

You are drink for all the thirsting:

**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

You are sacrifice and feast.  
**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**  
**Gift of God, O Emmanuel**

## **Canticle of Praise – ELW 148**

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia.

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,  
whose blood set us free to be people of God.  
Power and riches and wisdom and strength,  
and honor and blessing and glory are his.  
This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia.**

**Sing with all the people of God  
and join in the hymn of all creation:  
Blessing and honor and glory and might  
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.  
This is the feast of victory for our God,  
for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.  
Alleluia. Alleluia.**

(Assembly may be seated.)

## **Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; 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 35: 1-10**

*The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.*

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and shouting.  
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.]]  
<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
"Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you."  
<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;  
<sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
<sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.  
<sup>9</sup> No 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.  
<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm 146: 5-10**

<sup>5</sup> Happy are they who have the God of Jacob <sup>1</sup> for their help,  
**whose hope is in the <sup>1</sup> LORD their God;**

<sup>6</sup> who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that <sup>1</sup> is in them;  
**who keeps promis- <sup>1</sup> es forever;**

<sup>7</sup> who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to <sup>1</sup> those who hunger.

**The LORD sets the <sup>1</sup> captive free.**

<sup>8</sup> The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who <sup>1</sup> are bowed down;

**the LORD <sup>1</sup> loves the righteous.**

<sup>9</sup> The LORD cares <sup>1</sup> for the stranger;

**the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way <sup>1</sup> of the wicked.**

<sup>10</sup> The LORD shall <sup>1</sup> reign forever,

**your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. <sup>1</sup> Hallelujah!**

## **Epistle Reading – James 5: 7-10**

*In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.*

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Message for the Young at Heart**

## **Passing of the Peace**

## **Special Music**

# **Gospel Announcement – Matthew 11: 2-11**

*(All who are able may stand.)*

## **Acclamation – ELW 151**

**(ALL SING) - Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

*John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.*

<sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.'

<sup>11</sup> "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(Assembly may be seated.)*

## **Message**

*(All who are able may stand.)*

## **Hymn of the Day – Canticle of the Turning – ELW 723 (vs. 1, 3, & 4)**

My soul cries out with a joyful shout  
that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,  
and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest.  
Could the world be about to turn?

### *Refrain*

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.

From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,  
not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears  
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more,  
for the food they can never earn;  
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,  
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

Though the nations rage from age to age,  
we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us  
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard  
is the promise which holds us bound,  
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,  
who is turning the world around. *Refrain*

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat

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## **Nicene Creed – ELW 104**

**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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
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,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who 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.**

*(Assembly may be seated.)*

## **Prayers of Intercession**

*Response*

(Liturgist) – God of grace,

**(All) – Hear our prayer.**

## **Offering**

### **Offertory - We Are An Offering – W&P 146**

We lift our voices, we lift our hands,  
we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering.

Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands,  
Lord, use our lives, they are yours: we are an offering.  
We are an offering.

## **Prayer**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation,  
and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all  
those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Great Thanksgiving – ELW 152**

**(PASTOR)** - The Lord be with you.

**(ALL)** - **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## **Pastor's Preface**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,  
through whom you will also make all things new  
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## **Our Response – ELW 153**

**(ALL SING)** - **Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

## **Lord's Prayer – ELW 154**

**(ALL)** - **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.**

## **Words of Institution**

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.

## **Confession Song – Lamb of God – ELW 154**

**(ALL SING) –**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world.  
Have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world.  
Have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world.  
Grant us peace. Grant us peace.**

## **Distribution**

## **Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day  
when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known  
your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus  
Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

The God of steadfastness and encouragement  
grant you to live in harmony with one another,  
in accordance with Christ Jesus.

**Amen.**

*(All who are able may stand.)*

## **Sending Song – Joy to the World – ELW 267** **(vs. 1, 2 & 4)**

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let ev'ry heart prepare him room  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

*(Assembly may be seated.)*

## **Announcements**

# **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**(ALL) - Thanks be to God.**

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**Third Sunday of Advent—December 14, 2025**

PASTOR	John Russell-Curry
GREETER	Chris Boyenga
READER/ASSISTING MINISTER	Tim Shaw
USHERS	Donald Gumm
ORGANIST/PIANIST	Martin Hansen

**This Week**

TODAY	<b>10 AM</b> Worship Service
	<b>After Service</b> Advent Bible Study
MONDAY	<b>10 AM</b> Council Meeting

***Readings for Sunday, December 21***

Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

***Attendance for last week 34 and via Zoom 3***

**Upcoming Events – Mark your Calendar**

**December 21 Worship Service & Advent Bible Study**

**December 24 Christmas Eve Service**

**December 25 Christmas Day—Church Office Closed**

**December 28 Worship Service**

**Prayers for healing:**

Dave Bettis; Gleneda Muralt; Dorothy Woody; Joel Knox; Rosie Sullivan; Eric Smith; Gleneda Muralt's niece, Shereida; Nan Dailey; Kimberly Castillo's daughter Jillian and mother-in-law Lupe; Pam Andersen; Pastor John Russell-Curry and his family; Warren Westerberg; Sylvia Poupard; Jeane & David Hetland; Annie Sofranek; David Cherf; and people who are ill around the world.

We lift prayers for our Benevolence of the Month, **Senior Brown Bag Program** and for our Sierra Pacific Synod Bishop, **Jeff Johnson**.