



**+ Third Sunday of Advent**  
**December 13, 2020**

**St. Andrew Lutheran Church**  
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**+ Third Sunday of Advent  
Order for Worship**

*“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances,” begins today’s reading from 1 Thessalonians. While we may struggle with these practices when times are tough, the prophet Isaiah and the psalmist remind us that God is working toward our restoration and healing, even turning mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. This week’s Gospel features John the baptizer’s testimony pointing us to the one who comes after him, Jesus Christ. In his coming, we receive God’s promised good news, and the hope that “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.” (Isaiah 61: 11)*

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Gathering Hymn      Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!      ELW 246  
v. 1-4**



1 Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! “Christ is near,” we  
2 Wak - ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth’s bond - age  
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don  
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is  
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther



hear it say. “Cast a - way the works of dark - ness,  
let us rise; Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling,  
down from heav’n. Let us haste, with tears of sor - row,  
wrapped in fear, he will shield us with his mer - cy  
and the Son with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it



all you chil - dren of the day!”  
shines up - on the morn - ing skies.  
one and all, to be for - giv’n;  
and with words of love draw near.  
while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878  
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

## Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

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.

**C: Amen.**

## Reading – Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11

<sup>1</sup>The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
the Lord 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;

<sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;

<sup>3</sup>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.

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>8</sup>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.

<sup>9</sup>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.

<sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for God has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
God 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.

<sup>11</sup>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.

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 126

*The psalm is sung by a cantor.*

*People of the assembly are invited to respond with the verses in bold.*

<sup>1</sup>When the LORD restored the for- | tunes of Zion,  
then were we like | those who dream.

<sup>2</sup>**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.”**

<sup>3</sup>The LORD has done great | things for us,  
and we are | glad indeed.

<sup>4</sup>**Restore our for- | tunes, O LORD,  
like the watercourses | of the Negeb.**

<sup>5</sup>Those who | sowed with tears  
will reap with | songs of joy.

<sup>6</sup>**Those who go out weeping, carry- | ing the seed,  
will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves.**

## Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

<sup>16</sup>Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise the words of prophets, <sup>21</sup>but test everything; hold fast to what is good; <sup>22</sup>abstain from every form of evil.

<sup>23</sup>May the God of peace sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>The one who calls you is faithful, and will do this.

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Acclamation**

P: Alleluia. I am sending my messenger before you, who will prepare your way before you.  
Alleluia.

## **Gospel – John 1: 6-8, 19-28**

P: The holy Gospel according to St. John.

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

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

<sup>19</sup>This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” <sup>20</sup>He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” <sup>22</sup>Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” <sup>23</sup>He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ”

as the prophet Isaiah said.

<sup>24</sup>Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup>They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” <sup>26</sup>John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup>the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” <sup>28</sup>This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Children's Word**

**Children’s Song**

**Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah**

**ELW 240**

**v. 1-3**

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

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

**3 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.**

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954. Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-722139.

## **Sermon**

*To lift up the poetic imagery of our hymnody,  
the Hymn of the Day will be spoken during the season of Advent.*

**Hymn of the Day**

**O Lord, How Shall I Meet You  
v. 1-3**

***ELW 241***

**1 O Lord, how shall I meet you,  
how welcome you aright?  
Your people long to greet you,  
my hope, my heart's delight!  
Oh, kindle, Lord most holy,  
your lamp within my breast  
to do in spirit lowly  
all that may please you best.**

**2 I lay in fetters, groaning;  
you came to set me free.  
I stood, my shame bemoaning;  
you came to honor me.  
A glorious crown you give me,  
a treasure safe on high  
that will not fail or leave me  
as earthly riches fly.**

**3 Love caused your incarnation;  
love brought you down to me.  
Your thirst for my salvation  
procured my liberty.  
Oh, love beyond all telling,  
that led you to embrace  
in love, all love excelling,  
our lost and fallen race.**

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676; tr. composite.

### **Dedication and Offering of Gifts**

*Once a year, St. Andrew offers the opportunity for people of the congregation to make a formal commitment to God, offering our time, talent, and financial resources in grateful response to God's love and faithfulness. As we dedicate these gifts today, we give thanks for the many ways in which God continues to bless and provide for us, for the mission and ministries of the congregation, and for the world.*

P: People of God ...

... that the lives of all God's people would be enriched and blessed.

Let us pray. God of abundance,

**C: we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. We pray that these gifts would strengthen our witness to the light of Christ and your love for all the world. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

P. Gracious God, receive these signs of our gratitude, trust, and commitment that we offer before you today. As the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is in it to spring up, we pray that you would bless these gifts, that they may be a means for your justice and righteousness to spring up before all nations. May our work in your name be fruitful, that all may know your good news of healing, restoration, comfort, and hope through the light of your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

## **Prayers of the People**

P: God of power and love, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world, as we offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all creation.

*After each petition*

P: Hear us, O God; **C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Draw near to us, O God,  
and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

P: Gathered as one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**C: 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.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## **Benediction**

P: The Creator of the heavens and the earth  
bless you in your Advent waiting,  
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,  
the sustaining Spirit guide your journey, ✠ now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**



**1 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!**

**3 Then fling the gates wide open  
to greet your promised king!  
Your king, yet ev'ry nation  
its tribute too may bring.  
All lands will bow before him;  
their voices join your singing: *Refrain***

*Refrain*

**Hosanna to the Lord,  
for he fulfills God's word!**

*Abbreviations*

P: Pastor/Presiding Minister

L: Lector

A: Assisting Minister

**C: Congregation**

***ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal***

*Those serving in worship today*

Prelude	Nicholas and Sylvia Reeder
Welcome	Colleen Cooke
Gathering Hymn	Jimmi Kocher-Hillmer, Organ
	Timothy Kocher-Hillmer, Vocals
Lector	Alda Maria Gonzaga
Psalm	Laura Reynolds
Children's Song	Kristen Asplin, Vocals
	Maria Mangano, Clarinet
Hymn of the Day (Spoken)	Jimmi and Timothy Kocher-Hillmer
Sending Hymn	Jimmi Kocher-Hillmer, Organ
	Timothy Kocher-Hillmer, Vocals
Director of Faith Formation	Christopher Atwood
Presiding Minister	Pastor Ross Carmichael

*Liturgy and Hymnody Acknowledgements*

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