

December 11, 2022

Welcome!

We are glad to have you join us in the worship of Our Lord. Please sign the guest book at the back of the sanctuary.

Mask wearing is optional if you are fully vaccinated.

Today's Altar Servers

Leader:Rev. Peter Kuritz
Greeters/Ushers... Janice Neagle
Lector: Peggy Rapp
Music: Molly Finkbiner

Faith Lutheran Church
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THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers: sponsored by Dave and Barbara Laughlin. "Happy Birthday in Heaven to George Serviss!"

Christmas Cookie Sale: The congregation is strongly encouraged to bake cookies!

Friday, December 16: Bring/package cookies, 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 18: Sell cookies, \$5/box

MEETINGS

AA Meeting: Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 12 p.m.

American Red Cross Blood Drive: Wednesday, December 28, 2022, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Please call 1-800-733-2767 to pre-register.

Bible Study: Each Sunday, 7:30 a.m. in the Community Room.

Choir rehearsals: Sunday mornings, 8:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve Chime Choir Rehearsal: Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m., December 14th, & 21st.

Instrument rehearsal and Sunday School: Wednesdays, 5 p.m.

Faithful Community Quilters: Second Monday of the month, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Soup Supper Advent Study: Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., Community Room.

Sunday School Advent Program/Congregational Dinner: Tonight at 5 p.m. Hope to see you there!

Pastor Kuritz has weekly office hours: hours are posted on the white boards at the back of the church or to contact him, use his private email: pastor@faithlutheranblakeslee.org

Bulletin Sponsors and Flower Donations: A new sign-up sheet for 2023 is located on the table in the foyer entrance of the church. In-house bulletin for \$10 and \$20 towards silk flowers or you may bring your own fresh flowers.

Usher and Lector Volunteers needed, contact Jacquie Halko. Please call (570) 646-3922 or email at jacquie5444@yahoo.com.

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.

PRELUDES: "Episode on Veni Emmanuel," "Lift up your Heads," "Wake Awake for Night is Flying"

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of new beginnings, **we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.**

People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on † Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN: "*Awake Awake and Greet the New Morn*" **WOV 633**

GREETING

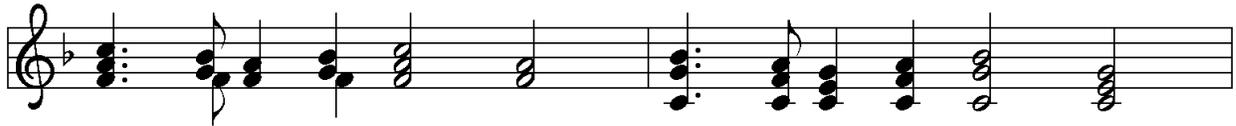
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.



KYRIE

Lord, Have Mercy



1, 3 Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
2 Chris - te e - lei - son. Chris - te e - lei - son.
1, 3 Lord, . . . have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
2 Christ, . . . have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
Chris - te e - le - i - son.
Lord, . . . have mer - cy.
Christ, . . . have mer - cy.

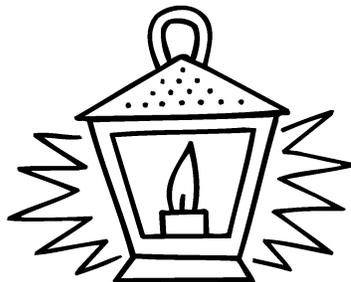
Music: Russian Orthodox traditional

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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 LESSON: Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. 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. Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. 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." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 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; 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. 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. 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. 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.



Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM/LITURGY A Candle-Lighting Liturgy

We light one candle of JOY.

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand.
Amen.



THESE ARE THE DAYS OF ELIJAH

These are the days of Elijah,
Declaring the word of the Lord
And these are the days of your servant Moses,
Righteousness being restored
And though these are days of great trial
Of famine and darkness and sword,
Still, we are the voice in the desert crying
'Prepare ye the way of the Lord!' **Refrain**

Refrain. *Behold He comes riding on the clouds,
Shining like the sun at the trumpet call;
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee,
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.*

These are the days of Ezekiel,
The dry bones becoming as flesh;
And these are the days of your servant David,
Rebuilding a temple of praise.
These are the days of the harvest,
The fields are as white in your world,
And we are the labourers in Your vineyard,
Declaring the word of the Lord! **Refrain.**

There's no God like Jehovah. There's no God like Jehovah.
There's no God like Jehovah. There's no God like Jehovah! **(2x) Refrain.**

SECOND LESSON: James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, 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. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: “Alleluia”

(Please stand as you are able)

Gospel Acclamation *Celtic Alleluia*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Verses may be sung by a leader. Then the alleluia is repeated.

Music: Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker
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GOSPEL READING

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 11:2-11
Glory to you, O Lord.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

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? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 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. 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.

Please be seated)



CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

(Please stand as you are able after the sermon.)

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Prepare the Royal Highway" LBW 26

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Welcome New Member

Pr.: *Christine Braun* has come to us and desires to make public affirmation of her Baptism.

Dear Christine, we rejoice to receive you, member of the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, into our fellowship in the Gospel.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: In Holy Baptism our Lord Jesus Christ received you and made you members of His Church. In the community of God's people, you have learned from His Word, God's loving purpose for you and all creation. You have been called to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, therefore, I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the Church, the faith in which we baptize.

Do you renounce all the forces of evil, the devil, and all his empty promises?

C: I do.

Pr: Do you believe in God the Father?

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Pr: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C: 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.

Pr: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C: **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**

Pr: Christine, you have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism: to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

If so, answer: *"I do, and I ask God to help guide me."*

Christine: **I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

Pr: People of God, do you promise to support Christine and her family and pray for them in their life in Christ?

If so, answer, *"We do, and ask God to help and guide us."*

C: **We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.**

Pr: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in Christine the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of council and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Pr: We rejoice with you, Christine, in the life of baptism. Together as the body of Christ here at Faith Lutheran we give thanks and praise to God and proclaim the good news to all the world.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, we rejoice in the gifts of your Spirit. Equip the global church to magnify your love and peace in every land. We pray for the work of the Lutheran World Federation and ELCA Global Mission. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Abundant God, we rejoice in your creation. Revive lands we have squandered and depleted. Make gardens flourish in cities and neighborhoods. Cleanse polluted air

and water so living things may breathe, drink, and praise you. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Righteous God, we rejoice in your justice. End racism and oppression. Deliver all who are unjustly imprisoned or persecuted. Reconcile nations and peoples in conflict. Help us pray for our enemies. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Healing God, we rejoice in your compassion. Comfort any in distress because of worry, illness, or loss. Strengthen and protect health care workers, rescue teams, crisis counselors, and all who risk themselves to keep others safe. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Abiding God, we rejoice in your company. Give us calm and patient hearts as we gather with family and friends. Keep us mindful of those for whom this season is not happy. Console the grieving and surround them with loving support. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

PRAYER LIST

Megan; Jim; Jeanine; Tom and Valerie M.; Daniel; Marge M.; Jenn; Lorraine; Rachel; Jeffery H.; Mya; Matthew B.; Carol K.; Joe M.; Roberta and Tony R.; Eric L.; Cleo; Deb H.; Joseph F.; John K.; Rev. Rick Chavez, Larissa, Drew D., Peter S., Jeannette M., J. Foltz Family

Faithful God, we rejoice with Mary, Mother of our Lord, and with all the saints, that your mercy endures for all generations. Look with favor on those who have died and lead us to joyfully sing of your everlasting promises. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

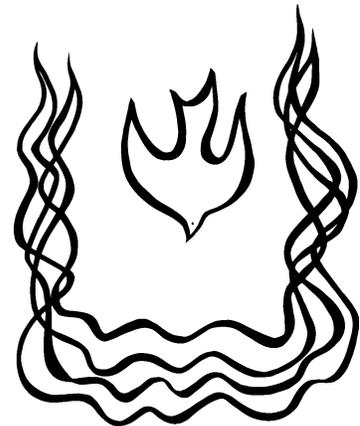
THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(Please share Christ's peace in social and acceptable ways.)

(Please be seated)



OFFERING MUSIC: “Verset,” Leon Boellman,
Played by Molly Finkbiner

(Please stand as you are able)

OFFERING PRAYER

Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE



Ⓟ The Lord be with you. ☩ And al - so with you.



Ⓟ Lift up your hearts. ☩ We lift them to the Lord.



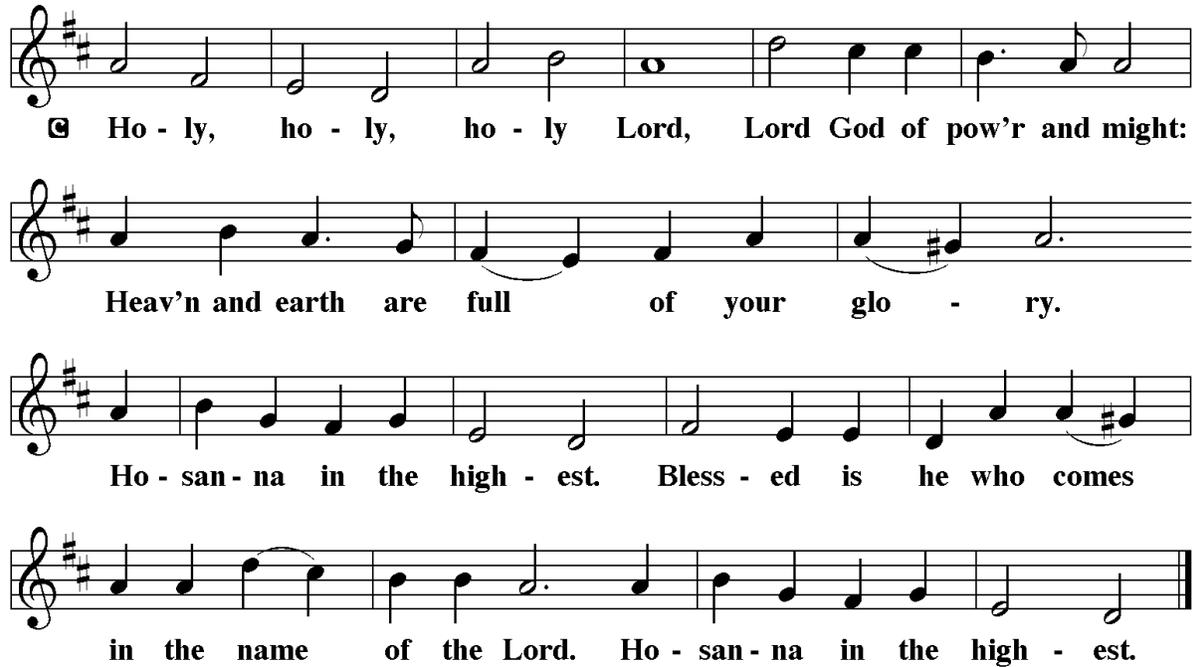
Ⓟ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



☩ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

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:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
 Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

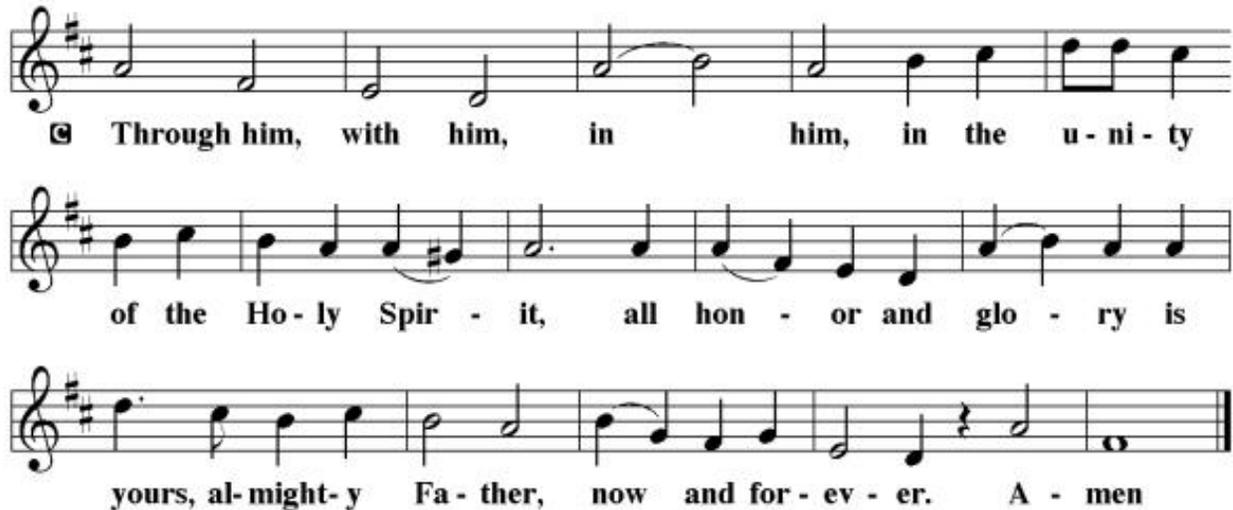
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.



Through him, with him, in him, in the u - ni - ty
of the Ho - ly Spir - it, all hon - or and glo - ry is
yours, al - might - y Fa - ther, now and for - ev - er. A - men

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

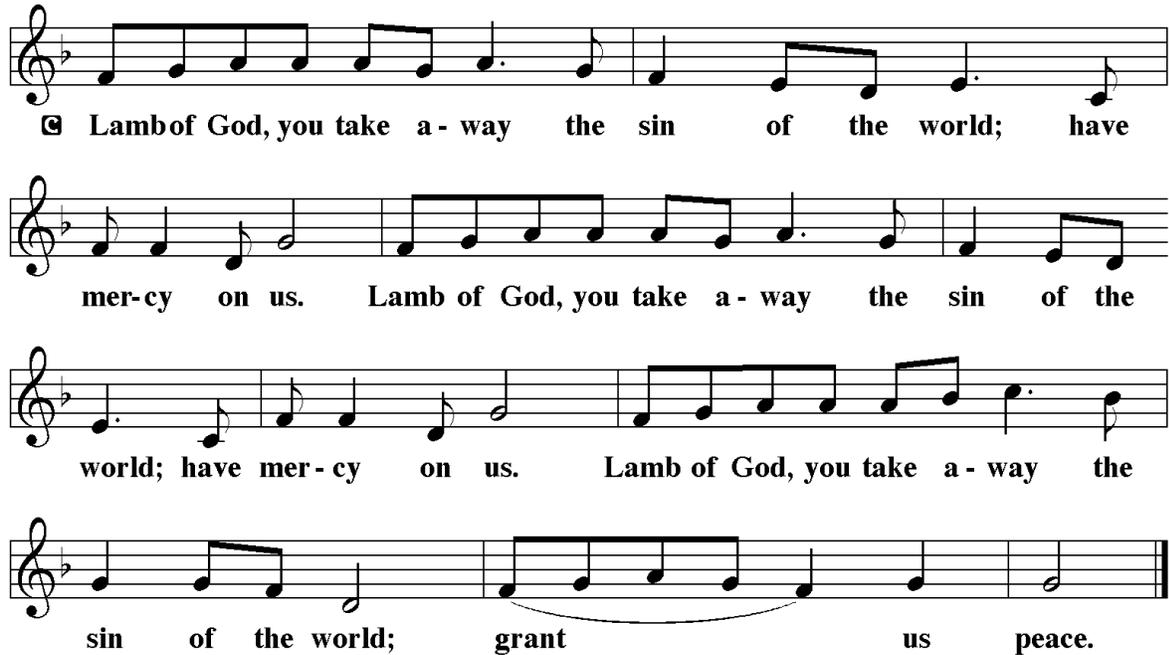


INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

(Please be seated)

LAMB OF GOD



☐ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

“The body of Christ.... Given for you.” “The blood of Christ.... Shed for you.”

(Please stand as you are able)

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and fill you with His spirit. **Amen.**



SONG AFTER COMMUNION



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre-pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el. Now, Lord, you let your ser - vant go in peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: "People, Look East" **WOV 626**

DISMISSAL:

Go in peace. Christ is near. **Thanks be to God.**

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Gathering Song:

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Hymn of the Day:

Prepare the Royal Highway, Text: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1772-1847; tr. Hymnal version, 1978, Tune: Swedish folk tune, 14th cent. © Public Domain. Special Music: Canticle for Advent, Lloyd Larson. #33378. © 2000, Beckenhorst Press, Inc. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE # A-726919. All rights reserved.

Sending Hymn

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Third Sunday of Advent

Living In the Now and the Not Yet



In this season of Advent we stand in the discomfoting quiet of waiting for the salvation of the Lord while simultaneously seeing that very salvation breaking into the world around us. Like John the Baptist we ask Jesus “are you here, or should we still wait?” The answer to this question is “yes.” Yes, Jesus is here among us in his body and blood at the eucharist. But we wait for the day when he returns. Yes, Jesus is here among

us bringing peace and reconciliation. But we wait for the day when he will make *all* things new. The new life promised by the coming of a savior is both realized and still to come. We who live in the Christian faith do so as people searching the world around us for signs of God’s kingdom. Gathering as Christ’s body on earth, we have a sort of dual-citizenship in the now and the not-yet as we both proclaim that Christ is among us and also fervently pray “even so, come Lord Jesus.” As believers, our hope does not rest in the efforts of our piety or in the comfort of the hereafter. Rather, our hope is in the promises of a gracious, faithful God; promises fulfilled before our eyes and those not yet seen. We long for the day in which, like Isaiah’s vision of what will be, the blind see and the lame leap like deer. Yet we tell what we see and hear around us: that the dead are raised and the poor receive good news. The day is here and yet still we wait. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.