



SUNDAY

DECEMBER 12, 2021

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Lighting of the Advent Candle – Joy

L: Savior, come, make this world right.
Break the dawn with your light.

**C: Bring justice and peace to earth
Fill our hearts with holy mirth.**

L: Hear the promise of the Psalm:

Lift your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

Who is the King of glory?

The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle.

Lift up you heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

Who is this King of glory?

The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.
(Psalm 24: 7-10)

Prepare the Royal Highway vs.3

ELW# 264

(Lighting of the Advent wreath)

Then fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king!
Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
All lands will bow before him; their voices join your singing:
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!

P: The promised grace of our Lord,
the blessed love of our Creator,
the eternal presence of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Introduction

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our
God.

.....Silence is kept for reflection.....

P: God for whom we wait,

C: **in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.
We falter in our call to tend your creation.
We find our sense of self in material wealth.
We fear those different from ourselves.
We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.
Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace.
Amen.**

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!
Through the power of the Holy Spirit, ✝ your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

C: **Amen.**

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

C: **Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Readings

Assisting Minister

Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-6

In your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (Is. 12:6)

²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might and has
become my salvation.

³**With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.**

⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name; make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name is exalted.

⁵**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.**

⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O^l royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Philippians 4:4-7

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Acclamation (*please stand as you are able*)

Gospel: Luke 3: 7-18

P: The holy gospel according to Luke the 3rd Chapter

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.** (*Please be seated*)

Sermon

Apostles Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again, he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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

Assisting Minister

P: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Offering

Offering Anthem

Offering Prayer

P: God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people.

Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

C: Amen.

Holy Communion

Words of Institution

P: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

C: **Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again.**

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Distribution

Prayer after Communion

P: Blessed Jesus, at this table, you have been for us both host and meal. Now send us forth to extend our tables and to share your gifts until that day when all feast together at your heavenly banquet.

C: Amen.

Blessing

P: The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

C: **Amen.**

Postlude

We invite the congregation to remain seated and enjoy the postlude.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

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Leading Worship Today

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Mitch Kinsinger

Seminarian: Per Halaas

Organist: Barbara Rossow

Assisting Ministers: Dennis Rasmusson and Mary Kowitz

Video Master: Silvester Vicic

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