



KIMBALL MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
101 VANCE AVE. KANNAPOLIS, NC 28081

December 17, 2023 Third Sunday of Advent
11:00 am

P: Pastor

A: Assisting Minister

L: Lector

C: Congregation



“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Handbell Choir

~arr. B. Childers

WELCOME

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.

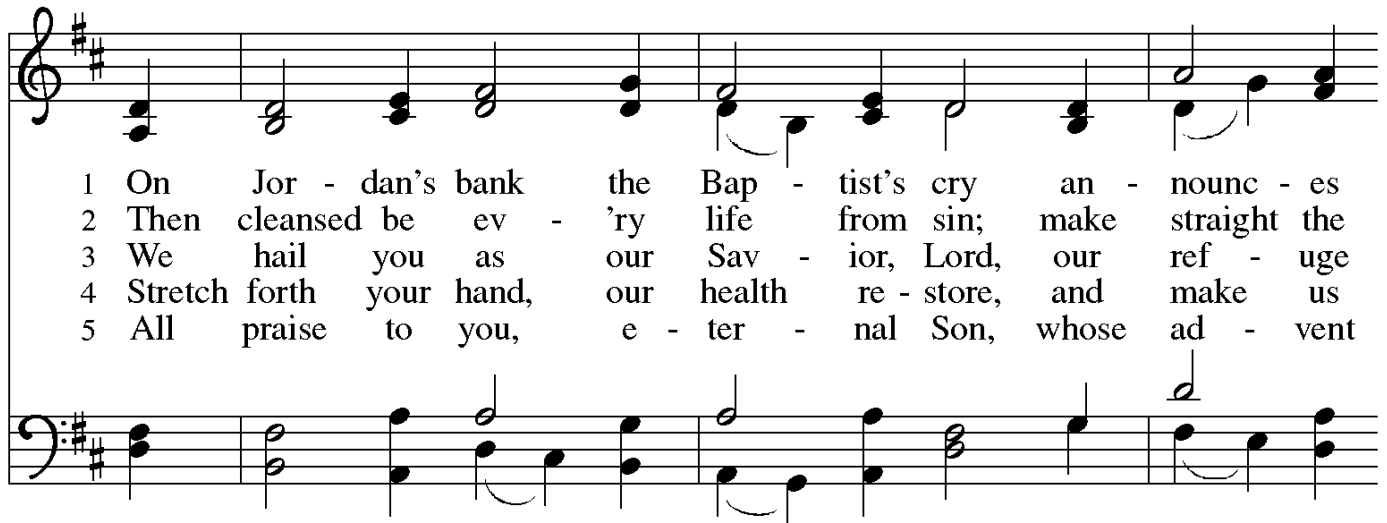
We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love.

Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace.


Amen.

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

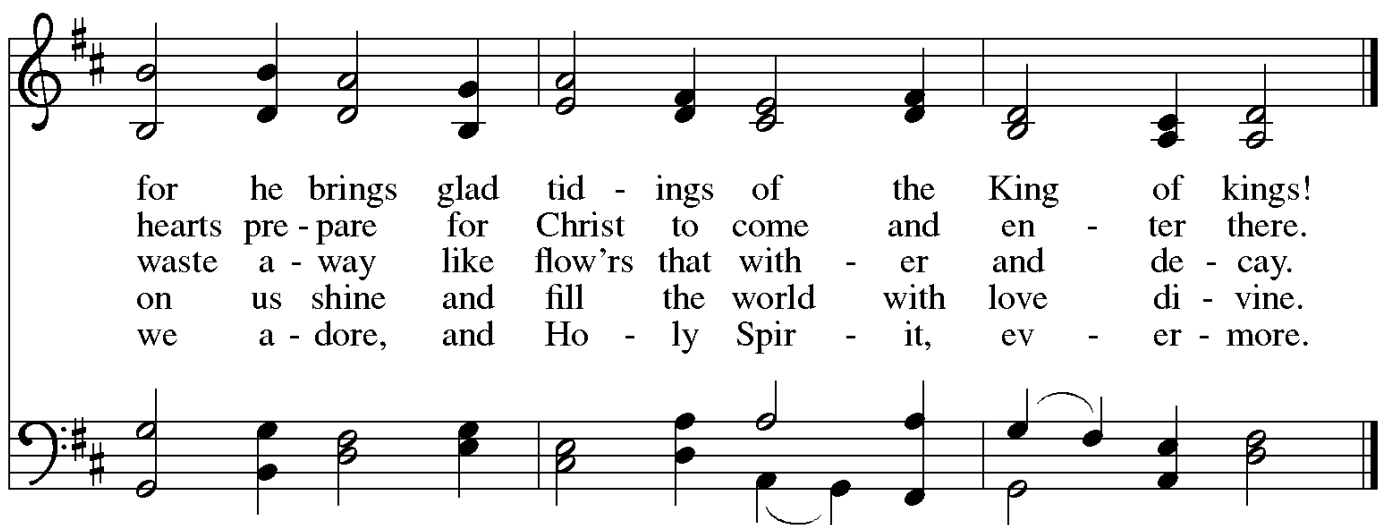
C Amen.



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
 way for God with - in, and let us all our
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
 rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

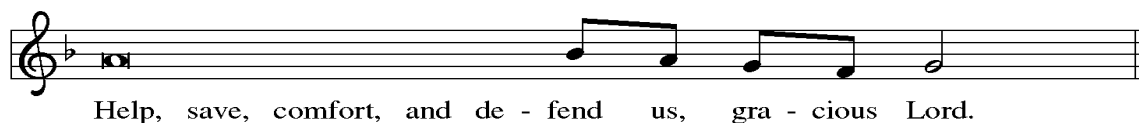
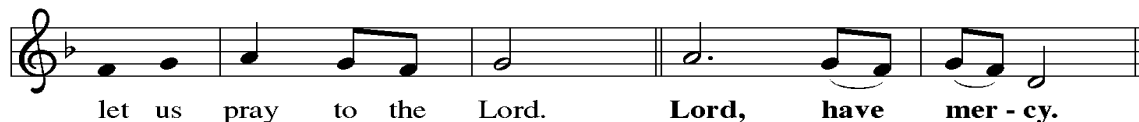
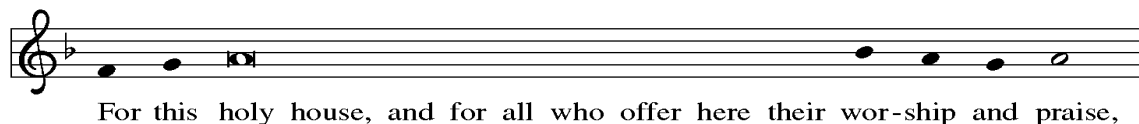
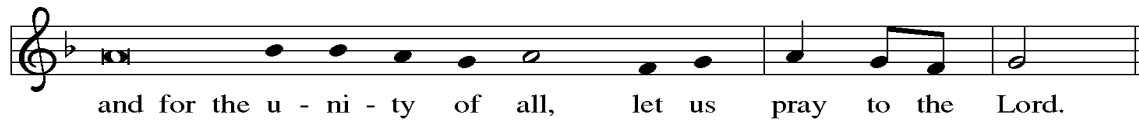
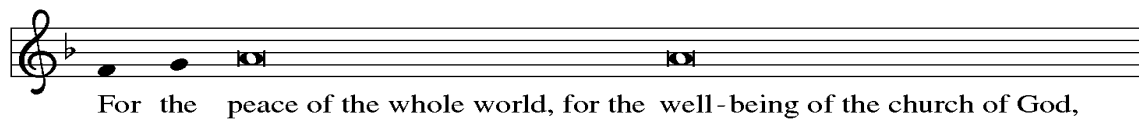
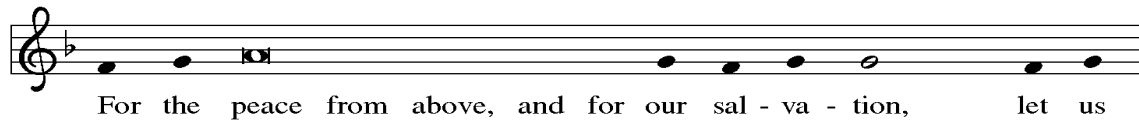
GREETING

A 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.

KYRIE

ELW S120



PRAYER OF THE DAY

A 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.

(Please be seated)

LET'S TALK

READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

L A reading from 1st Thessalonians...

Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

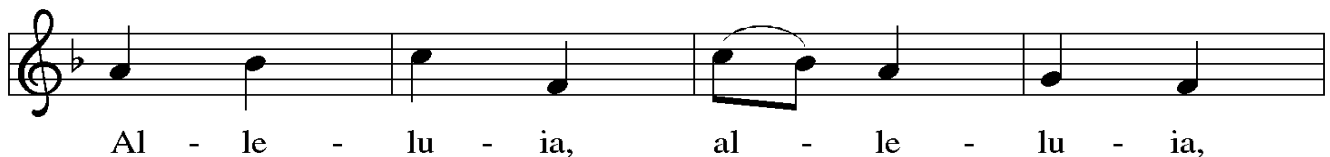
L Word of God, word of life.

C Thanks be to God.

L Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW S124



Repeat alleluia



GOSPEL

John 1:6-8, 19-28

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 1st chapter.

C



John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

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

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C



SERMON

Pastor John Futterer

1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
 2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
 3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to

fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
 look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
 be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with

light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
 shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
 pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain

In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the

day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the

cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

CHOIR SINGS

Maker of the stars of night, of the sun by day,
rise in us and bring your light;
burn our shadows away.

In the darkness where we dwell, we await the light of God, Emmanuel.

RESPONSIVE LITURGY

He Will Be Called Prince of Peace

P During Advent we wait for the coming Savior who is our Prince of Peace.

C **The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.**

P In the midst of conflict, we look to the One who brings harmony.

C **The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.**

P In the midst of confusion, we look to the One who brings clarity.

C **The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.**

P In the midst of division, we look to the One who brings unity.

C **The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.**

P In the midst of separation, we look to the One who restores the broken.

C **The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.**

Candle Lighting

P Today we light three candles. The **first candle**, reminds us of our hope in knowing Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor. The **second candle** reminds us of our joy in proclaiming Christ as Mighty God. We light the **third candle** to remind us that Jesus is our Prince of Peace. In a world filled with conflict, tension and discord, we look for the peace that comes through Christ alone.

C

Ev-er-last-ing Fa-ther, Prince of Peace,
 Won-der-ful Coun-se-lor, Al-might-y God,
 Em-man-u-el, Em-man-u-el,
 God with us, Em-man-u-el.

CLOSING PRAYER

P Gracious Lord, as we continue our Advent journey, we acknowledge that our surroundings are often far from peaceful. By your Spirit, help us to be agents of peace in the world around us. Throughout this season continue to fill us with the peace that surpasses all understanding. We pray this in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

A With the people of God in Christ now and in every time, let us confess our faith.

C **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; by the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. 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.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He 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.

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

P With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

A Fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy as we bear witness to the great things you have done. Give your church a spirit of gladness as we gather and as we are sent. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A Let the trees of the field sing your praise. Protect forests, orchards, rainforests, and all wooded areas from disease and deforestation. Keep us grateful for their gifts of oxygen, food, shade, and shelter. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A You love justice and promise your favor to those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, and incarcerated. Grant wisdom and compassion to those who work for public safety and all who work within prisons, jails, and courts, that mercy may increase and violence wither away. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A Give us strength to pray for our world without ceasing and provoke us toward love and good deeds for all who are in need. Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care. Empower us as helpers and advocates. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

A Open our hearts to those who serve as truth-tellers in our church and in our society. Bless leaders in church and society in their task of proclamation. Amplify voices of peacemakers, advocates, and especially those whose voices are ignored or marginalized. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A With gratitude we rejoice in the saints who witnessed to your life in all circumstances, in whom your Spirit was not quenched, even in death. Through them, teach us always to hold fast to what is good. Merciful God,

C receive our prayer.

P Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

C Amen.

SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

A Following his resurrection, the Lord Jesus breathed peace upon his disciples. We share in this peace of Christ in the Church today. The peace of the Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

A Please greet those around you with words of peace.

(Especially greet the children and youth.)



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
 bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
 fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
 nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
 pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray. God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from
 The earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of
 your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P 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.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

C 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

P In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

You may receive the Elements as the words are said:
The Body of Christ given for you; The Blood of Christ shed for you.

ANTHEM

A Light Will Shine

~L. Larson

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

C Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

BENEDICTION

P The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.

C Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

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DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Keep awake.

C Thanks be to God.

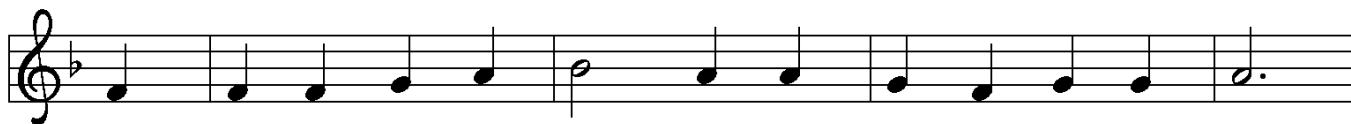
POSTLUDE

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

~arr. C. Hamlin



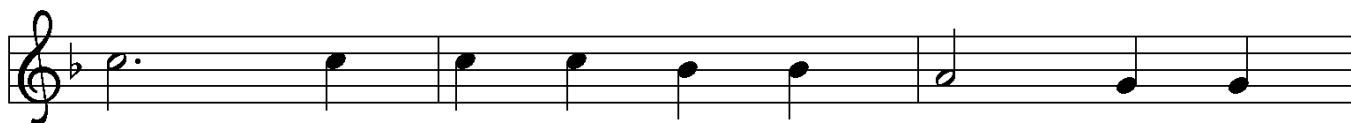
1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, great Da - vid's great - er Son!
 2 You come with res - cue speed - y to those who suf - fer wrong,
 3 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;
 4 Kings shall fall down be - fore you, and gold and in - cense bring;



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!
 to help the poor and need - y, and bid the weak be strong;
 love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.
 all na - tions shall a - dore you, your praise all peo - ple sing.



You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive
 to give them songs for sigh - ing, their dark - ness turn to
 Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald,
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows as -



free, to take a - way trans - gres - sion and
 light, whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, are
 go; and righ - teous - ness in foun - tains from
 cend; your king - dom still in - creas - ing, a



rule in eq - ui - ty.
 pre - cious in your sight.
 hill to val - ley flow.
 king - dom with out end.

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