

Order of Worship for December 13, 2020

The Third Sunday in Advent

Prelude

Welcome

Gathering

Let us join together to worship the God who fulfills all promises, Jesus Christ, the hope born of Mary, and the Holy Spirit, who fuels our hope as we await Christ's return.

Advent Wreath Lighting Week 3

With voices rising, rising like incense

We sing to you in hope, our God

We sing to you in hope, our God

Present in healing ash after wildfire

Present in awakened city after uprising

Present in caring community during pandemic

Present in muddy ground after storm and flood

From reservation and shelter

From sanctuary and parking lot

From hospital and home

Where love gathers us, Advent finds a place to exist

We sing to you in hope, our God

We sing to you in hope, our God

You are present, present in all places

Lighting of 3 Advent Candles

Hymn: O Come O Come Emmanuel, vs. 1

O come, o come, Emmanuel And ransom captive Israel

That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear

Rejoice! rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, o Israel.

Confession

Jesus, who comes as new birth,

we have prepared for you

with comfortable traditions and humble requests.

We have memorialized your birth

as if it was a past act

and not the bold declaration of a living God.

We have rested in the safer hope of your work,

abandoning our call as co-creators of the Beloved Community,

harming your children with our ill-informed action and comfort-catering inaction.

All this we humbly confess.
Help us remember in this season of anticipation
that we prepare not only for you,
but because of you.
Challenge us to examine our intentions,
and to hold sacred both the act of preparing,
and the transforming justice love of the one who comes.

Amen

Forgiveness

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.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

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.
Amen.

Psalm 126

- 1When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.
- 2Then 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."
- 3The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.
- 4Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.
- 5Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.
- 6Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

When We Share God's Dream (Psalm 126) by Richard Bruxvoort-Colligan

Verse 1:

**When we share God's dream
We know there will be laughing
There will be singing
When we share God's dream**

**We know there will be justice
There will be kindness
When we share God's dream
When we share God's dream**

Verse 2:

When we share God's dream
 We know our hearts are beating
 with all creation
 When we share God's dream
 There's a vision to guide us,
 hope to revive us
 When we share God's dream
 When we share God's dream

Verse 3:

When we share God's dream
 We see God's kingdom coming
 now in our longing
 When we share God's dream
 We know Go in our suffering,
 God in our longing
 When we share God's dream
 When we share God's dream

Children's Sermon**New Testament Reading: Luke 1:46b-55**

46Mary sang, My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
 47my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
 48for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.
 From this day all generations will call me blessed:
 49you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
 and holy is your name.
 50You have mercy on those who fear you,
 from generation to generation.
 51You have shown strength with your arm
 and scattered the proud in their conceit,
 52casting down the mighty from their thrones
 and lifting up the lowly.
 53You have filled the hungry with good things
 and sent the rich away empty.
 54You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,
 to remember the promise of mercy,
 55the promise made to our forbears,
 to Abraham and his children forever.

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

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.

6There 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.

19This 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.

Sermon by Pastor Steve Brackett- Assistant to the Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod

Hymn: O Come, All Ye Faithful

**1 O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the king of angels:**

**Refrain: O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!**

**2 The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,**

**born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing! Refrain**

**3 Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
in the highest: Refrain**

**4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing: Refrain**

Apostle's Creed

**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

God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news. Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship. Embed your word in their hearts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of every living creature, you announce the year of your favor for all of creation. Extend your kindness and relief to endangered animals and plants. Strengthen the human beings who rely on the rhythms of nature to make their living. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through their actions, especially as they make decisions about the Covid-19 pandemic. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of healing and comfort, be with all who are struggling during this time of the worsening Covid-19 pandemic. Bring healing to all who are sick, peace to all who are dying, and comfort to all who mourn. Bring encouragement and endurance to all health care workers, school employees, and essential workers. Bring hope to those who are struggling with the economic effects of the pandemic. Guide the work of researchers and scientists as they continue to develop vaccines and treatments for Covid-19. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. Comfort all who mourn, especially the family and friends of Mike Peters. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant love. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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

Amen.

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.

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all the earth!

3 How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!

Blessing

May you find time for rest this season
May you create space to prepare
May the Lord our God fill you with hope
May Jesus Christ be ever present in your heart
May the Holy Spirit illuminate your way

Amen

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

And have fun doing it.

We will! Amen!

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BY THE NUMBERS

Check Register Balance 11/20/2020
\$10,772.38
Operating Bank Loan: \$4,912.27
PPP Loan Balance:\$16,984 (Forgiven)

Offering: 12/6/20
Current: \$1,950
Benevolence: \$32
Improvement: \$85
Parsonage Internet: \$60
NS Benevolence: \$120
Jesup Ministerial: \$20
Lutheran Chaplaincy: \$20

Announcements:

Offering Envelopes: Your 2021 envelopes may be picked up at Shirley Bergman's porch at 1115 6th St. across from the church Sunday the 13th and until Christmas Eve. Also they will be at the church Christmas Eve.

Virtual Christmas Pageant: This year, our Christmas Eve service will be a virtual Christmas Pageant, with the United Methodist church. We will also have a virtual choir as part of this service! If you would like to participate in the virtual choir, but need help with technology, please contact Pastor Kristen.

Virtual Choirs for online Christmas Eve service:

*******All individuals and families** are invited to record themselves singing along with Silent Night, which may be found [here: https://youtu.be/wqndI4QtjE4](https://youtu.be/wqndI4QtjE4) It works the best to listen on one device (like a computer or ipad) and record yourself on another device (like a phone). If you are able, please hold a lit candle while you sing. If you would like to participate but don't have the technology, or you need help, please let Pastor Kristen know. And if you feel self-conscious singing by yourself, please know that in the virtual choir, you will be singing along with lots of other people and nobody will be able to hear your individual voice. We are hoping for as much participation as possible!

*******Children** are also invited to record themselves singing along with Go Tell It On The Mountain, which may be found [here: https://youtu.be/EsJh-3HQNrM](https://youtu.be/EsJh-3HQNrM) Again, it works best to listen on one device while recording on another. If you would like to participate but don't have the technology, or you need help, please let Pastor Kristen know.

Homebound members: Mary Jo Sullivan is at Grand View in Oelwein

Military members: Jordan Leach is home from Sheppard AFB TX. Both he and Justin are at the 185th Air Refueling Wing in Sioux City, IA. If you know of anyone else serving in the armed forces,

please contact the church office (secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org) or (827-6626). We'd like to remember them in our prayers.

Prayer Requests: We know that this is currently an especially stressful time for health care workers and school employees. If you would like to include a healthcare worker or school employee by name (first name only) in the prayers of intercession for this season, please tell Pastor Kristen (pastor@americanlutheranjesup.org) or Jessica (secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org) or (827-6626).

Advent Sermon Series: The sermons for the Sundays in Advent will be from members of the synod staff of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. The Sermons will be based on the ELCA World Hunger Advent Study, [God With Us](#). A copy of this study may be downloaded from our church website.

Advent resources: We will have Advent resources available for pickup on the porch of Shirley Bergman's house, across 6th street from the church. These will be available throughout the season of Advent. Each household is invited to take a pack of tea light candles (for making a home Advent wreath), an Advent devotional booklet, and a church Christmas songbook. In addition, families can take packets of children's bulletins for each of their children (bulletins are available for readers and pre-readers), copies of the words to "Go Tell it On the Mountain," and battery powered candles. Please return candles and songbooks after the Christmas season is over.

Christmas gifts for Bremwood Lutheran Home: For many years, our congregation has provided Christmas gifts for the residents of Bremwood Lutheran Residential Treatment Center in Waverly. This year, due to the pandemic, Bremwood has suggested Walmart gift cards instead of an actual Christmas gift that is shopped for. This offers the opportunity to remember their residents while minimizing exposure to the coronavirus for those making donations. Counselors will shop for the residents utilizing the gift cards. If you would like to donate, you can drop off gift cards at the home of Mary Adams, 1215 Hawley Street, Jesup. A table has been set up inside the walk-in garage door for you to drop off your donations. The door will be open until 7 PM each day. You may also donate money through the church, marking "Bremwood" on your donation. Financial gifts for Bremwood must be received by December 14th to allow time for the counselors to shop. If you have questions you may call Mary at 827-3365 or (319) 269-3478. Thank you for your continued generosity.