



# 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

Lord of Life Lutheran Church, North Pole, AK  
(907) 488-6720 [www.lordoflifeak.com](http://www.lordoflifeak.com)

*Assistant Minister = Blue*

*Welcome!* Words in **bold** are said together.

Children are always welcome - they worship God too! Cloth bags with quiet activities are by the stairs to keep them engaged during worship. Our nursery is at the bottom of the stairs, to the left.

## *Confession and Forgiveness*

*Leader: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Congregation: Amen.***

*L: God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin. (silence for reflection)*

*L: Everlasting God, **C: you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.***

*L: Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. **C: Amen.***

## *Gathering Hymn – Hark the Glad Sound #239*

1. Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long;  
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne and ev'ry voice a song.
2. He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.
3. He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,  
and with the treasures of his grace to enrich the humble poor.
4. Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace, your welcome shall proclaim,  
and heav'n's eternal arches ring with your beloved name.

## *Lighting the Third Advent Candle*

*L: 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. **C: Amen.***

*Greeting – L: 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 and This is the Feast ELW p. 138 (Setting 3)*

*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.**

*Scripture Readings*

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 p. 603

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he 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 he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he 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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 126 p. 499

<sup>1</sup>When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.  
<sup>2</sup>Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was 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 rejoiced.  
<sup>4</sup>Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.  
<sup>5</sup>May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.  
<sup>6</sup>Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 p. 961

<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 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. <sup>24</sup>The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation*

The holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

John 1:6-8, 19-28 p. 862

<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.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

### *Children's Message and Sermon*

David Ingram

### *Hymn of the Day – Prepare the Royal Highway #264*

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;  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!
2. God's people, see him coming; your own eternal king!  
Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!  
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you!  
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:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!
4. His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heav'n above.  
His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love.  
So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding;  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!

### *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 God's People*

Each petition ends "Lord, in your mercy," please respond: **hear our prayer.**

*Sharing the Peace – L: The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all. C: And also with you.*

### *Offering*

- ◇ Mail: Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 1005 St. Nicholas Drive, North Pole, AK 99705
- ◇ Online: “giving” tab at [www.lordoflifeak.com/giving](http://www.lordoflifeak.com/giving) or the QR Code →
- ◇ Phone app: download “Give Plus Church” search by zip 99705, choose Lord of Life, and follow the instructions. Giving is secure.



### *Offering Hymn – Wait for the Lord #262*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.  
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

*Repeat verse*

### *Offering Prayer*

**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. Amen.**

*The Great Thanksgiving and Holy, Holy, Holy*

*Christ’s Words of Institution and Communion*

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

*Post Communion Prayer*

*L: 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.*

*The Lord’s Prayer*

We pray together with confidence the prayer our Lord Jesus taught us to pray,

**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.**

### *Announcements*

- Today: Ornament Painting Party 12-1:30pm
- Wed: 6:30pm Soup Supper/7pm Holden Eve Advent worship – last one 😊
- Beef shares available – proceeds to Lord of Life’s heat bill
- Coming up: 12-21 deadline to deliver Adopt a Family gifts to church; 12-24 cookie exchange; 12-24 photos before/after worship (volunteer needed); 12-31 1<sup>st</sup> New Member Class

## *Sending Hymn – Joy to the World #267*

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
3. No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders, and wonders of his love.

### *Blessing*

*L: 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.*

### *Dismissal*

*L: Go in peace. Keep awake. C: Thanks be to God.*

### ***Special Thanks to...***

Assistant Minister, Evan Keil  
Usher(s),  
Video, Becky Peterson  
Communion Prep,  
Greeter,

Reader, Janis Robertson  
Acolyte, Cohen Neske  
PowerPoint,  
Fellowship,

### ***Birthdays & Anniversaries...***

12-23    Curtis Matz

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