

SAINT MICHAEL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024

400 River Road, Columbia, South Carolina 29212

*In the order of service, congregational responses are printed in **bold**.*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Come By Here

Choir Ladies Trio

Please Stand

GATHERING HYMN *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

ELW 242

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,
alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,

we confess that we have sinned.

We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.

We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might,

we confess that we have sinned.

We have turned away from our neighbors.

We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,

we confess that we have sinned.

We plead: come to us.

Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✙ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

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.**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Choir sings verses, congregation sings Refrain after v. 2,4,6*

Refrain



My soul pro - claims your great - ness, O Lord; I
sing my Sav - ior's praise! Great won - ders you have
done for me, and ho - ly is your name.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. 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.

Please Sit.

ADVENT CANDLE SONG *Come Now, O Prince of Peace*

ELW 247, vs. 3

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Let us pray. Blessed are you, God of might and majesty, for you promise to make the desert rejoice and blossom, to watch over the strangers, and to set the prisoners free. As we light these candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus. O ransomed people of the Lord, come,
let us travel on God's holy way and enter into Zion with singing. Amen.

BLESSING OF THE CHRISMON TREE

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world, and we remember that light as we decorate this tree with Chrismons which symbolize the Light of the World, Jesus Christ. When we see this tree, remind us that we are all part of your family, and that even though we are all different, you love each of us as a precious child.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

FIRST READING: 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.

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The 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.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

“Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The 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 ¹⁸ as on a day of festival.”

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

¹⁹ I 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.

²⁰ At 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: 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.

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

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

Our hearts burn with - in us as you open to us the scriptures.

Repeat alleluia

GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the 3rd chapter.

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.

⁷ John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and 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. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” ¹¹ In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³ He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴ Soldiers 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.”

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John 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 strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His 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.”

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

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

Please Sit

MESSAGE

Frank W. Anderson

Please Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

Hark, the Glad Sound!

ELW 239

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A brief silence.

God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression ~~based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age~~. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick. We pray especially for . . . Show your compassion and remember your people in love. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Please Sit

THANKSGIVING AND MEAL

We give in grateful response for all God's gifts; God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

*We offer the convenience of **secure online giving** through **Tithe.ly**. Please see the back page for more information about online giving. Offering plates are currently located at each entrance/exit for your convenience. If you need an envelope, please ask an usher.*

SPECIAL MUSIC

Isaac Shevenell, solo

Please Stand

OFFERING HYMN

We Are Waiting for Jesus

ACS 905

1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also 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 our thanks and praise.**

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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

We praise you, living and loving God, that you have sent your Son to this world. Christ is your Wisdom, sweetly ordering all creation, our Lawgiver, burning with justice, the Branch from Jesse's tree, sprouting flowers from old roots, the Key of David, opening our prison doors.

And let the people cry, O come and save us: **O come and save us.**

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.

And let the people cry, O come and save us: **O come and save us.**

We beg you, mighty and merciful God: send us the Spirit of your Son. Dwell in this food and in all who share it, that the earth may rejoice in your presence. In Christ, the Dawning Day, enlighten a darkened world, reign as Sovereign to unite all peoples, and live among us, Emmanuel, our deepest desire now and forever.

And let the people cry, O come and save us: **O come and save us.**

Even so, come, Lord Jesus, with your Father and your Spirit, to the church, and receive our praises, now and forever. Amen. **Amen.**

And let the people pray:

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed.

Blest be God, who is our Bread; may all the world be clothed and fed. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

Please Sit

COMMUNION

Holy Communion is offered to all who believe in Jesus Christ, who confess their sins, and seek forgiveness. For those who are able, an usher will instruct the congregation when to come forward using the center aisle; please return to your pew using the side aisles. Wine, juice (white), and gluten-free wafers are available. Please alert an usher if you require assistance so communion can be brought to you.

LAMB OF GOD

Be known to us, Lord Je - sus, in the break - ing of the bread.

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

Be known to us, Lord Je - sus, in the break - ing of the bread.

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

COMMUNION HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* **ELW 257, vs 1-4**

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✚ bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *On Jordan's Stormy Bank I Stand* **ELW 437**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel. **Thanks be to God.**

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ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Sacristans: Rita Anderson & Karla Maloney
Lector: Karla Maloney
Ushers: Paul Nevergoll and Steve Evans

ALTAR FLOWERS given today to the glory of God and in honor of their 61st anniversary on December 22nd by Bob & Sandra Michelsen.

THIS WEEK AT SAINT MICHAEL *4:55 pm Mon & Fri Update Calls from Pastor Frank!*

<u>TODAY, Sunday, Dec 15</u> <i>Advent 3</i>	9:15 a.m. <i>10:30 a.m.</i> <i>4:00 p.m.</i>	Sunday School <i>Worship with Holy Communion—also streaming</i> <i>A Dickens of a Christmas—Bill's Pickin Parlor</i>	10:00 a.m. 	Choir Warmup
<u>Tuesday, Dec 17</u>	12:00 p.m.	AA Meeting (<i>Back to Basics Group</i>) FH		
<u>Wednesday, Dec 18</u>	10:00 a.m. <i>11:30 a.m.</i> <i>7:00 p.m.</i>	Bible Study – Pastoral Epistles - Fellowship Hall <i>Christmas Luncheon at Zorba's—Seven Oaks</i> <i>Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room</i>		
<u>Thursday, Dec 19</u>	12:00 p.m.	AA Meeting (<i>Back to Basics Group</i>) FH		
<u>Friday, Dec 20</u>	10:00 a.m.	AA Meeting (<i>Mid-Morning Meeting</i>) ChEd		
<u>Saturday, Dec 21</u>	<i>9-10 a.m.</i>	<i>Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room</i>		
<u>Next Sunday, Dec 22</u> <i>Advent 4</i>	9:15 a.m. <i>10:30 a.m.</i>	Sunday School <i>Worship with Holy Communion—also streaming</i>	10:00 a.m.	Choir Warmup

Poinsettias available for dedication on Christmas Eve. Each plant is a \$20 donation. Please get the dedication form in TODAY. Plants may be taken home after the 4 pm worship.

Holiday Fellowship Luncheon at Zorba's on Wednesday, December 18th after Bible Study. All welcome! Dutch Treat.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYERS: FOR FRIENDS--HOME, REHAB, SENIOR LIVING* AND/OR ILL

*Dot Black	*Miriam Shealy	Alice King	Paul Nevergoll
*Bob Bowers	*Tommae Sligh	Jill Lee	Harry O'Quinn
*Don & Gwen Buff	-----	Mickey Lindler	Brooke Pittman
*Rose Colley	Kristin Belusko	Crosby Livingston	Jane Potts
*Helen Derrick	Donny Day	Sharon Lundy	Grady Sharpe
*Virgie Dreher	Lisa Gillespie	Angie Matlosz	Melinda Sharpe
*Barbara Fowler	Douglas Gourley	Terry Matlosz	Richard Starnes
*Bob Michelsen	Joy Gunter	Caroline McCauley	Marlene Stirewalt
*Alma Paulson	David Heinrich	Gary McManus	Bruce Whelchel

MEMBERS & FAMILIES OF THE US ARMED FORCES & MILITARY, INCLUDING:

Tyler Alexander, USMC; Sherri S's grandson	Collin Maloney, USAOTS; Mike & Karla's son
Samantha Davis, USA; Gene & Diana's niece	Griffin McLeod, SCNG; Mandy's son
Zachary Davis, USN; Carolyn's grandson	Hunter Purvis USA; Jerry & Cheryl's SIL
Grant Frick, SCNG; Linda F's grandson	

SAINT MICHAEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



If you are a guest, welcome! Please ask an usher for a blue *Connections Card* and drop it in the offering plate so that we can get to know you better. As you leave today, be sure to introduce yourself to the pastor. If you would like to learn about membership or have other questions, please call the church office. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

Tithe.ly online giving direct via the ONLINE GIVING tab at www.stmichael1814.com and available in the app store, www.tithe.ly/give. One-time or recurring gifts can be scheduled, eliminating the need for carrying cash or check writing. The process is quick, safe,

and funds are deposited immediately. Personal information is secure, and you can change your giving profile at any time. Designations for memorial or special gifts are available on the drop down fund menu. An instant receipt is sent via email or text for your tax records, too.

Restrooms located in both the Administrative and Christian Education Buildings.

Children are always welcome in our worship service, but for those who desire it, a nursery is located in the Administrative Building. We stream via Facebook Live.

Large Print bulletins available from an usher.

The People of Saint Michael, Ministers

The Reverend Frank W. Anderson, Pastor

Karen Shevenell, Cantor

Kris Esgar, Parish Administrator