St. Paul Lutheran LCMS Julesburg, CO

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December 14, 2025

The Pathlight

Your Word Is A Lamp To My Feet and a Light To My Path. Ps 119:105 Zion Lutheran LCMS Big Springs, NE

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Straighten Up Your Burden is Lifted

"Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:28)

Then as now nations are in turmoil, the earth is filled with violence, people are trembling with fear..... My home breaks up, disaster takes away what I have, uncertainty keeps me awake, and social pressure increases. I struggle with my sinfulness, temptation is all around, I endure the disgrace of those who have sinned against me. Disease proliferates, wars rage continually, those I love die.

God's Word says loves us, that God delivers us, that God saves us. Even though our Lord has told us directly that we would. The Lord says, "the wickedness of man [is] great upon the earth, and that every intention of his heart was only evil continuously." God says so et, we still can't figure out why the world has so much evil in it. The Lord said, "For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it." Yet we are frustrated that nothing mankind does seems to change anything.

Add that Jesus said, "Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Still, for the life of us, we can't figure out why the world seems to want us dead and will do anything to accuse us of the worst. Jesus also said, "Take up your cross and follow me."

Where is Jesus? Jesus is found in the suffering, the struggles, the shame, and death. "When you see these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." Jesus is found on the cross. And it's on His cross where our sins are counted as His, and He pays for them in full. It's on His cross where our shame is counted as His, and He bears it, in humiliation for all the world to see, for the world's sake.

When you face the things of this world, good or bad, which will always be there, you never face them alone. Your Redeemer is with you. And these things are not the proof of God's absence. Just the opposite. He's telling you to take them as proof of His presence. "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

Pastor Christensen

For now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. 1Cor. 13:12

Lutheran Service Book Order of Service

OPENING HYMN # 347 "Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

LITURGY pg.151 The Divine Service (setting one)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

INTROIT

KYRIE pg.152

OLD TESTAMNET READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

EPISTLE: James 5:7-11

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-15

APOSTLES CREED pg.159

HYMN OF THE DAY #345 "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding"

SERMON

OFFERING

OFFERTORY pg.159

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION pg.166

CLOSING HYMN #349 "Hark the Glad Sound"

SILENT PRAYER

Depart in Peace

Servants today

St.Paul

Organist – Gail Nicolaus, Ushers /Greeters- Gail Newth/ David Orth

Zion

Organist-Gail Nicolaus, Ushers/Greeters-Randy Schlake, Altar Guild-Shelle & Jodi



Calendar of the week to come

St. Paul

Dec.15-9:00AM-Bible Study

Dec. 17-5:00PM- Catechism

7:00PM- Advent Service/refreshments after service-at St. Paul

Servants for Advent Worship Service- Brian Boehm/Gail Nicolaus

Dec. 21-8:00AM-Bible Study

9:00AM-Worship Service/Communion

Servants for Worship Service-Les Ebke/Dwight Ebke/Jeanie Boehm

Zion

Dec. 17-3:30PM-Midweek

7:00PM-Advent Service/refreshments after service- at St. Paul

Dec.21-10:00AM-Sunday School

11:00AM-Worship Service/Communion

Servants for Worship Service- Randy Schlake/Shelle & Jodi/Jeanie Boehm

MOVIE AND A MEAL AT ZION -Zion and St. Paul members are invited to attend a Sunday afternoon December 14th 3:00 pm showing of the movie "The Nativity Story". Following the movie there will be time for singing Christmas hymns and carols before a soup supper is served. If you can't make the movie, come for the soup at 5:00!



12/16-Irene Abts

12/18-Lois Hagemann



Advent Bible Trivia

- 1. Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) closely parallels which Old Testament prayer of thanksgiving?
- A. Hannah (1 Samuel 2)
- B. Deborah (Judges 5)
- C. Miriam (Exodus 15)
- D. Ruth (Ruth 4)
- 2. The rose candle lit on the Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called what?
- A. Candle of Peace
- B. Candle of Joy (Gaudete)
- C. Candle of Hope
- D. Candle of Light
- 3. In Romans 5, Paul teaches that suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope. What does he say hope does not do?
- A. Fail
- B. Disappoint
- C. Fade
- D. Perish
- 4. Which prophet foretold that the Messiah would "proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners," later read by Jesus in the synagogue?
- A. Jeremiah
- B. Isaiah
- C. Ezekiel
- D. Malachi
- 5. The Latin word Gaudete, associated with the Third Sunday in Advent, comes from Philippians
- 4:4. What is the full phrase in Latin?
- A. Gaudete semper in Domino

- B. Gaudete in Domino semper
- C. Semper gaudete in Domino
- D. Gaudete Domino semper
- 6. In Luke 1, Elizabeth says to Mary, "Blessed is she who believed." What specific promise does she reference?
- A. The promise of John's birth
- B. The promise of the Messiah's birth
- C. The promise of Israel's restoration
- D. The promise of David's throne
- 7. Which Advent hymn is based on the "O Antiphons," ancient prayers sung in the week before Christmas?
- A. "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
- B. "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"
- C. "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending"
- D. "Joy to the World"
- 8. In John 15, Jesus says, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you." What does He say this joy will be?
- A. Eternal
- B. Complete
- C. Overflowing
- D. Unshakable
- 9. The Advent wreath tradition originated in which country in the 16th century?
- A. Germany
- B. France
- C. England
- D. Switzerland
- 10. In Isaiah 35, often read in Advent, what will the redeemed do as they return to Zion?
- A. Shout for joy
- B. Sing with everlasting joy
- C. Dance before the Lord
- D. Offer sacrifices of thanksgiving
- Answers
- A. Hannah (1 Samuel 2)
- B. Candle of Joy (Gaudete Sunday)
- B. Disappoint (Romans 5:5)
- B. Isaiah (Isaiah 61:1; fulfilled in Luke 4:18–19)
- B. Gaudete in Domino semper ("Rejoice in the Lord always")
- B. The promise of the Messiah's birth (Luke 1:45)
- A. "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
- B. Complete (John 15:11)
- A. Germany
- B. Sing with everlasting joy (Isaiah 35:10)

Third Sunday in Advent Devotional:

Joy That Endures

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice." – Philippians 4:4

"Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see
Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with
glory." – 1 Peter 1:8

Advent joy is not shallow cheerfulness—it is a deep, steady gladness rooted in Christ's presence. Joy is what remains when circumstances strip away comfort, when waiting feels long, and when hope seems fragile. The rose candle we light today reminds us that joy is not optional—it is commanded, because it flows from Christ Himself. Joy is not the absence of sorrow, but the presence of Christ in the midst of it. It is the song of Mary, who praised God even as she faced uncertainty. It is the strength of Paul, who wrote "Rejoice in the Lord always" from a prison cell. It is the promise of Jesus, who told His disciples that their grief would turn to joy, a joy no one could take away.

A farmer once lost nearly everything in a flood—his crops, his tools, his home. When neighbors came to see him, they expected despair. Instead, he stood in the muddy field and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. I still have Christ, and that means I still have joy."

His words echoed through the community. People brought food, clothing, and help. What began as tragedy became a testimony: joy rooted in Christ cannot be drowned, because it is anchored in eternity.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are our joy. Teach us to rejoice not only when life is easy, but when life is hard. Let Your joy be our strength, our song, and our witness to the world. May we shine with the gladness of Your coming, so others may see and believe. Amen.





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