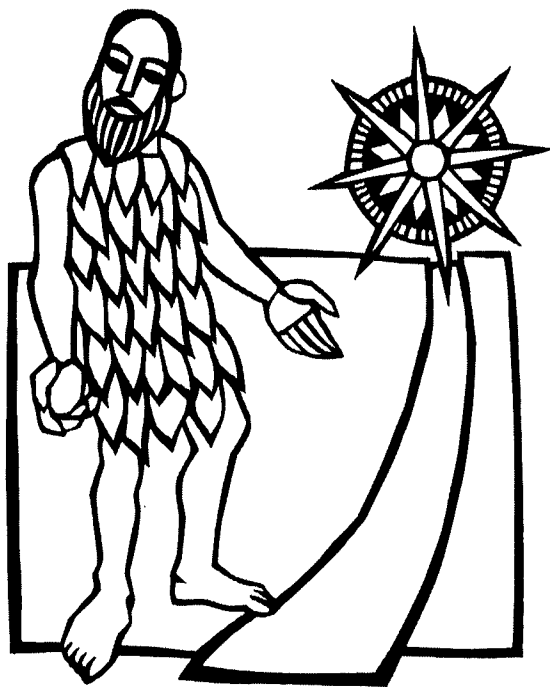


3rd Sunday of Advent

December 14th, 2025 ~ 8:30am



+ Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church +

2451 Saucon Valley Rd. Center Valley, PA 18034

Office: 610-865-4144

The Rev. Lisa K. Borrell, Pastor ~ 610-762-2139

Quinette Brucker, Dir. of Music/Organist

WELCOME

() Please stand as you are comfortable and able*

Prelude Music

Welcome & Announcements

***Opening Litany for Advent**

P: The coming of our Lord is near. Something new is around the corner.

C: Love, joy, peace, and hope ... we await the promise of your coming.

P: The coming of our Lord is near. Something new is appearing.

C: A child, a savior, God's much beloved son ... we await the hope of your coming.

P: The coming of our Lord is near. Something new is being birthed.

C: A new heaven, a new world, a new community ... we await the long expected One.

P: The coming of our Lord is near. We wait in joyful expectation for what is emerging.

C: Love comes down at Christmas ... and we await your coming.

P: Light of the world draw close. Shine on us with your guiding presence, truth, forgiveness, mercy, and love.♥

***Opening Hymn #242**

"Awake, Awake ..."

***The Greeting and Prayer of the Day**

P: 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.

P: Let us pray. ~ Stir up the wills of all who look to You, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Advent Candle Lighting (3rd candle is lit)

“We Light a Candle” (verse 3 sung together ~ see insert)

Prayer

We praise You, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ’s advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord’s coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.

The First Reading ~ Isaiah 35: 1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God’s coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of

the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

Psalm 146: 5-10 (read responsively, lector then congregation)

⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the LORD their God;

⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;**

⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who
hunger. The LORD sets the captive free.

⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those
who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**

⁹The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD sustains
the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

¹⁰**The LORD shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

The Second Reading ~ James 5: 7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord

is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

*The Gospel Acclamation



*The Holy Gospel ~ Matthew 11: 2-11

The Holy Gospel according to the 11th chapter of St. Matthew.

Glory to You, O Lord.

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth. From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending

my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’
11 “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

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

Sermon

***Hymn #264** **“Prepare the Royal Highway”**

***The Apostles’ Creed** (professed together)

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.

***Prayer of the Church**

After each prayer petition, please respond:

God of grace ... **Hear our prayer.**

Anthem

“A Place to Keep Your Son”

The Blessing of the Communion Elements



The Lord’s Prayer (traditional ~ prayed by all)

+ Communal Reception of the Sacrament +

Communion will be distributed by method of intinction; that is, the wafer will be dipped in the chalice so that both elements are received together.

Post Communion Blessing, Prayer, and Benediction

P: God for whom we wait, in this meal You give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P: The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Closing Hymn #248

“People Look East”

*The Dismissal

Go in peace to prepare the way for the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Postlude Music

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Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches.*

Kindly return the song inserts to the back table in the narthex
so they may be used next week. Thank you!

*thank
you*

... to Maureen Wagner for serving as our lector

... to Drew Wagner for serving as our live stream tech



The altar flowers have been sponsored by
Carolyn Wallace in loving memory of Pastor
Koonen. †



To be remembered in prayer ... Richard Eisenhart, Hope Geary, Jeanne Logan, Steve Schoepple, Barb Shaneberger, Kathleen Tuomela May, Darrell Tuomela, Joe Ulmer, people living in war-torn countries, victims of oppression, injustice, violence, and natural disasters, and other dear ones whom we name before God. †

Please join us for worship on Christmas Eve,

Wed., December 24th at 6pm.

Preludes begin at 5:45pm. All are welcome!



If you are looking for some quiet moments of respite, reflection, and light this Advent season, the Hellertown Area Ministerium cordially invites you to attend their "Longest Night" Service on **Sunday, December 21st at 7pm** at Lower Saucon UCC (1375 3rd Ave., Hellertown). Light refreshments will be served afterwards.