

Welcome!

O Come, let us worship! (Ps. 95:6)
Sunday, Dec. 13, 2020 Third Sunday of Advent



St. James Lutheran Church

1213 U. S. Route 22

Phillipsburg, NJ 08865

Vice Pastor: Stephen Yambor

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Please use the bulletin below to guide you through the service. For those using a computer/smart phone with video on Zoom, you will be led through the service with Power Point.

*Congregation members may be muted at times during the service as needed to maintain audio quality.

God Spots and announcements: Pastoral Care: If you would like a phone visit (during Covid) by the Pastor for yourself, family, friends, or a loved one, please call the church office with your request.

Announcements

A review of the Constitution will be held this Sunday the 20th, following the church service. Please review and note any changes or questions you have to ask at this time.

There will be one Zoom service on Christmas Eve at 7 PM. A letter containing the schedule and an envelope for the Memorial Tree Donations will be sent to your home. Tree Donations must be in by Dec. 19 to be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Please deposit envelopes in church mail box.

We realize a lot of changes are being made concerning church. However, expenses continue for our church. Benevolence is one not only for us, but helps to support others in their work. A locking mail box has been installed for your convenience to drop off envelopes during this time. Please continue to give.

Grocery shoppers have offered to pick up any needed groceries for those unable to get out. Please call the church at (908) 454-2864 and your call will be returned.

The Covid Outreach Committee is planning donations for the hygiene kits and groceries. Please help us do God's work by donating. Enclose your donation in a marked envelope for "Covid 19 donation" and mail to the church or put in our new locked mailbox at the church. Hygiene supplies can be left on the main porch.

Thank you.

Due to continued concern of Covid 19 it has been decided that we will continue with church services on Zoom and dial-in as shown below.

Zoom Dial-In Number and Code: Call: 1-646-558-8656

When asked, use access code: 908-454-2864

No Participant Code.

Password: 1750

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, 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

SATURDAY

Sing of Mary, Pure and Lowly



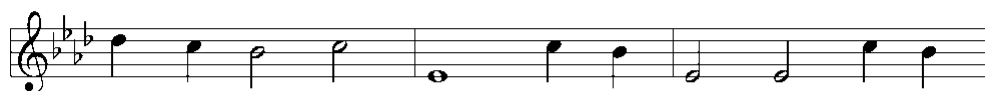
1 Sing of Mar - y, pure and low - ly, vir - gin
 2 Sing of Je - sus, son of Mar - y, in the
 3 Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther; glo - ry



moth - er, wise and mild. Sing of God's own Son most ho - ly, who be -
 home at Naz - a - reth. Toil and la - bor can - not wea - ry love en -
 be to God the Son; glo - ry be to God the Spir - it; glo - ry



came her lit - tle child. Fair - est child of fair - est moth - er, God the
 dur - ing un - to death. Con - stant was the love he gave her, though he
 to the Three in One. From the heart of bless - ed Mar - y, from all



Lord who came to earth, Word made flesh, our ver - y
 went forth from her side, forth to preach, and heal, and
 saints the song as - cends, and the church the strain re -



broth - er, takes our na - ture by his birth.
 suf - fer, till on Cal - va - ry he died.
 ech - oes un - to earth's re - mot - est ends.

Text: Roland F. Palmer, 1891–1985

Music: RAQUEL Skinner Chávez-Melo, 1944–1992

Music © 1985 Estate of Skinner Chávez-Melo

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SUNDAY

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounce - es
 2 Then cleansed he ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
 way for God with - in, and let us all our
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
 rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Collin, 1676–1749; tr. composite
 Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

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.

KYRIE (*SPOKEN*)

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

Help, save, comfort and defend us gracious Lord.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH

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.

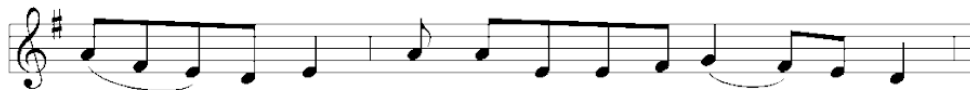
ADVENT HYMN "OH, COME, OH, COME, EMMANUEL" (LBW 34)

FIRST, SECOND, and THIRD VERSES ONLY

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on
 3 Oh, come, strong Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's
 4 Oh, come, blest Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by your
 5 Oh, come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times once gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
 heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice!
 and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
 and close the path to mis - er - y.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. John M. Neale, 1818-1866, alt.
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray,

Almighty God, you once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us, your people, the wisdom to see your purpose today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

† WORD †

FIRST LESSON

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

¹The 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; ²to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to 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. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ⁵For 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. ⁶Their 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. ¹⁰I 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. ¹¹For 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.

PSALM: Psalm 126

¹When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

³Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

⁴**The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.**

⁵Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses of the Negev.

⁶**Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.**

⁷Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

SECOND LESSON:

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May 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. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Word of God, word of life

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

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.

The holy gospel according to John 1:6-9, 19-29

Glory to you, O Lord

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He 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. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

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. ²⁹The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen

THE 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. 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 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. This week we pray for: Amy, Aaron, Tracy, Lynn, Nancy, Jack, Julie, and Leigh. We pray for friends and family of Janet Paulus. We pray for our homebound: Betty, Naomi, Helen, Janet, Elsie and Edna. Hear us, O God.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. 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.

Pastor

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

Amen.

OFFERING MUSIC

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray,

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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.

BLESSING

Pastor

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **Amen**


HYMN

SATURDAY


Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises

Haleluya! Pelo tsa rona

Refrain – sung twice each time



Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa ro - na, di tha -
Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our



bi - le ka - o - fe - la. Ha - le - lu - ya! Pe - lo tsa
hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your




ro - na, di tha - bi - le ka - o - fe - la. *End*
prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.



1 Christ the Lord to us said: I am wine, I am bread,
2 Now he sends us all out, strong in faith, free of doubt,

Repeat stanza, then sing refrain



I am wine, I am bread, give to all who thirst and hun - ger.
strong in faith, free of doubt. Tell to all the joy - ful gos - pel.

Text: South African; tr. *Freedom Is Coming*, 1984
Music: HALELUYA! PELO TSA RONA, South African
Tr. © 1984 Utryck, admin. Walton Music Corp.

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SUNDAY

People, Look East



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
 bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



cast, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 cast, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965
 Music: BESANÇON, French carol
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

We will. Thanks be to God.

Pastoral Care: If you need pastoral care for yourself, family, friends, or a loved one, please call the church office or contact Pastor Stephen Yambor (908)386-2778. The machine will ask for your name.

