

Bulletin for Sunday, December 12, 2021 For Distribution – Advent 3

Prayer of the Day

Merciful God, you come into our midst longing for communion with us, becoming one of us. Break our resistance to life with you, show us the path towards just relations, and bring us into your unimaginable peace; in Jesus name. Amen.

Readings

Zephaniah 3:13-20

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The 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. ¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The 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 ¹⁸as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹I 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. ²⁰At 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.
Word of God, word of Life! Thanks be to God!

Psalm – Isaiah 12:2-6

²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become my salvation. ³**With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.** ⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name; make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name is exalted. ⁵**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.** ⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Philippians 4:4-7

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

Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. 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. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” ¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴Soldiers 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.” ¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John 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 thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His 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.” ¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

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

Sermon - WHAT THEN SHOULD WE DO? LUKE 3:7-18, ISAIAH

What then should we do?” Each of us could probably tell about a time in our life when that was our question. I do not mean simply deciding what to do or figuring out what is on the to-do list for the day. The question in

today's gospel is one that strikes at the very core of our being. It comes to us in many different ways.

Sometimes we realize something about ourselves or our life; we recognize a truth and know we need to make a change. Or maybe we recognize a particular behavior or pattern of how we think, act, see, relate to others, ourselves, the world, or God. We do the same thing over and over and nothing seems to change. There is no movement or growth. Perhaps for the first time we acknowledge the reality of our problems. Or maybe we have lived with a deep sense of unhappiness or restlessness. And we are left wondering, "What do I do now?"

Other times, whether or not we want them or are ready, life brings us changes. The loss of a loved one, a divorce, a shattered dream, betrayal of a friend, the last child that grows up and moves out all leave us asking, "What do I do now?"

Regardless of how it comes about, that question brings us to a crossroads. It is a place of discernment and decision and ultimately a place of repentance. We must begin looking for a new direction for our life. It is the question today's gospel sets before us. It is asked three times – by the crowds, the tax collectors, and the soldiers.

Today's gospel is the continuation of [last week's gospel](#). John the Baptist is in the wilderness proclaiming repentance, echoing the Prophet Isaiah's words "Prepare the way of the Lord," and reminding us that all flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord. If last week's gospel was a call to repentance then today's gospel demands action. Repentance requires action. It must become for us a lived reality. The Word of God always seeks from us a response. And that is exactly what John the Baptist demands of those who come to him. "You brood of vipers, you sons of snakes – what are you doing here? Don't tell me who you are. I don't care who your family is. Show me who you are. Show me your repentance." John has challenged them to "bear fruits worthy of repentance."

His words have left them at the crossroads of repentance. They have heard a new truth in John's preaching. They have recognized a need to change and they want to know what to do. It is a legitimate question. Even when we recognize the need and desire to turn our life in a new direction, that whole process can seem so big, so overwhelming, that it seems impossible.

These are words that John speaks that are hard to hear. John specifically addresses certain groups of people: soldiers, tax collectors, and tells them things they don't want to hear. When asked by the crowds, what

then shall we do? John says, “whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” The coat makers and the people “who have” do not want to be told they have to give something up. Tax collectors don’t want to be told not to take more than they are supposed to as it will make it difficult for other tax collectors. Soldiers do not want to be told not to abuse their power. It may make the recruitment of new soldiers difficult. These groups do not want to be told that they must give things up. There are risks involved.

There is a story of an officer in the states who was assigned to execute a search warrant on a house with another number of individuals. While doing the search they went into the wrong house. An unarmed man ended up being shot and killed. The officer owned up to what had happened and took full responsibility for his error. When it came time for trial the number of boys in blue in the courtroom to offer support was zero. The police abandoned him because he gave something up. He acted with honesty and integrity and told the truth.

Luke is calling us to change our perspective and how we embody Christ. To take risks. Repentance is not just about us. It is connected to and happens in relationship with God and our neighbor. It always restores, enhances, and gives life. It is not about escaping the circumstances of our life but about engaging those circumstances in a new and different way – God’s way. Repentance opens us to see ourselves and each other as we really are in God. It fills us with the joyful expectation of the one who is more powerful, the Messiah.

So I wonder, what is the next right thing for your life? Identify that and you will have discovered a different perspective, a place of expectation, a place of the good news, and ultimately the place where the Messiah is coming to you.

It is Advent. So go and do the next right thing.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God’s presence.

God of presence and peace, strengthen your church around the globe to proclaim the message of your love coming to the world. Open our hearts to recognize your face in all people and in all of creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mighty redwoods and microscopic plants, fields and city parks, the wind and the waves, be a healing balm to our wounded planet. May we nurture what you have lovingly created. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of equity and compassion, bring righteousness and goodness to all peoples of the earth. Give a heart of discernment and integrity to leaders in our communities. Help us to seek reconciliation with our indigenous neighbours. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of comfort and care, be present with those who watch and wait. Come to all who await births, deaths, divorces, new unions, new jobs, retirements, healing, and life transitions of every kind (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of promises kept and new dreams awakened, shelter your people from destructive storms. We pray for those whose lives have been upended by natural disasters (*especially the people in the province of British Columbia*), for the work of Canadian Lutheran World Relief, and other relief organizations. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of companionship and community, we give you thanks for the saints who journeyed with us and now abide in you. Even in distress and uncertainty, make us confident that your promises endure forever. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

News & Announcements

Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Marlyn Kathen, Gerald Hubert, Richard Hubert, Stanley Kubiseskie, Heather Miller, Vince Rabishaw, Aileen Roesler, Joan Schimmens, Harvey Schruder, Kaitlyn Vaillancourt, Dorian Verch, Ryan.

DONATION

Brenda and Dan Dole have made a donation towards the Organ Restoration Fund in honor of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Koit & Diane Rull on December 18th. *“God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.” 1 John 4:9*

MID WEEK ADVENT SERVICES

During the season of Advent there will be midweek evening worship services on Wednesdays. Services begin at 6:30pm and last approximately ½ hour to 45 minutes. The liturgy we will be using is Holden Evening Prayer (*this is a sung service*). Make this part of your advent devotion and preparations.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Our Christmas Eve services will be at 2pm, 4:30pm, and 7pm. Once again, if you plan to attend one of our Christmas Eve services, you must register with the office. The 2pm and 4:30pm services are full. There is quite a lot of availability left for the 7pm service. Deadline for registration is Wednesday, December 22nd.

GUIDING LIGHT DEADLINE

Just a reminder that this Friday, December 17th is the deadline for the January issue of the Guiding Light. Please have all submissions in to Jean at the office by this date. Thank you!

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Your offering envelopes for 2022 are ready and available to be picked up today. They are located on the stage in the Parish Hall. Please take yours as well as any family members’ home with you today. Also, please do not use these envelopes until 2022, as it makes inputting donations a bit more difficult.

HOW TO WORSHIP FROM HOME

1. SERVICES BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12:30pm (if it is not on at 12:30, it will be on at 1:30pm) on Sunday mornings a week later.

2. SERVICES ARE BROADCAST ON SOCIAL MEDIA

You can watch the services on Youtube at Zion Lutheran Pembroke or on our Facebook page Zion Lutheran Church later that same day.

COFFEE HOUR RETURNS

As you know we have been able to enjoy refreshments and friends again after the service. We have a full supply of coffee but are in need of some sweets. You can donate something you have baked (we can freeze what isn't used right away) or something that you have picked up at the store and would like to share with others. Thanking you in advance for your donations. - Susan Dupuis

GIFTS FROM THE HEART

Give a meaningful gift from the comfort of home with CLWR's Gifts from the Heart catalogue. Your gift to a loved one will provide meaningful, tangible items for people around the world facing hunger, poverty and the threat of COVID-19. No matter which gift you choose, the gifts you give will change lives and touch your loved ones! Visit www.clwr.org/GFTH to learn more.

CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

If you wish to sponsor a poinsettia, or make a donation to a special fund in memory of a loved one, or in thankfulness to God for His many blessings, please make your **written** request on a donation form (*located at the entrances to the sanctuary*), and deposit it either in the offering plate, or place it in the office correspondence mailbox located on the steel office door by the elevator. Filling out one of these forms will ensure that your announcement will appear exactly as you wish. Your special Christmas donation may be designated to one of the following funds: Poinsettias (*any amount is ok – we are doing things a bit differently this year*), Building, Organ Restoration, Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), Good

Shepherding, General, etc. **The last day to make this special request is December 22nd.**

E-TRANSFER/ALTERNATE DONATION INFORMATION

If you cannot attend our in person worship services, we have set up e-transfer to the church's office e-mail zionoffice@nrtco.net for online donations. If you could also include your church offering envelope number in the message area, it would be greatly appreciated. You can still mail your cheque or arrange to drop off at the office. Pre Authorized Remittance (PAR) is another way to give weekly whether you're away or here. Contact the church office at 613-732-8792 for more information for this and updates on service times and requirements.

CAMP LUTHERLYN 100 X 100 IN 100 CAMPAIGN

As previewed at the AGM, now that the Comfort Station is complete the team at Camp Lutherlyn is turning its attention to the next Legacy Project. Hoffman Beach is a beautiful underused area and an important part of the camp's sustainable future. We are looking for 100 people to contribute \$100 in the next 100 days! Help us reach our goal. Your donation can be provided in one of four ways. You will receive a charitable tax receipt for the full amount. As we have been able to weather the pandemic, this year's fundraising campaign will go to Legacy Funds. We look forward to telling members, partners and friends of Camp Lutherlyn more in the months to come. Thank you for your contributions and the Camp Lutherlyn team looks forward to engaging you on future use and programming at Hoffman. - Robert Tremblay, Secretary, Camp Lutherlyn

ORGAN RESTORATION

It is hard to believe that it has already been 4 years since our major organ restoration. At that time, we were informed that the "leathers" would need to be replaced in 5 years. So 2022 is the year for the next phase of this restoration. In 2017, the estimate for this part of the restoration was between \$40,000 and \$45,000. As well, when we had some repairs done by Casavant in mid October, it was noted that some old repairs which were

done years ago by another company would have to be repaired again. Since the organ restoration in 2017, it has been decided that we would only be dealing with Casavant who built the organ. We will have a Casavant representative in very early in 2022 to give us an estimate for all the work that needs to be done so we will have an update for costs at that time. We do have some money in the Organ Restoration Fund but we still have a long way to go, so please consider this fund for your Christmas donations.

This Week at Zion – December 13 - 19

Tues **7pm** **Council Mtg.**
 7pm Narcotics Anonymous

Wed **6:30pm** **Advent Service**
 7;15pm Men's Choir Practice

Thurs **7pm** Mixed Choir Practice
 7pm Music Healing Vets

Friday **Guiding Light Deadline**

Sunday **10am** Worship Service with Holy Communion