THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 15, 2024

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

703 W 3RD Street
Mercedes, Tx 78570
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Immanuelmercedes @gmail.com

Website
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Rev. Ed Weber, Pastor
956.463.1305
eweber10@aol.com

Sunday
9:00 A.M.
Worship Service

10:30 A.M.
Adult Bible Class
Sunday School

Holy Communion:
Every Sunday

www.facebook.com/ Lutheranmercedes/

Website:
Misionemanuel.com

Office Hrs, M-F
8:00 am to 12:00 pm
CCLI # 2585510

" Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Luke11:22)

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 15, 2024

WELCOME to IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all our visitors this morning. It is our hope that you will benefit by your worship here with us, and that you will return again soon. We would greatly appreciate it if everyone would fill out an Attendance/Communion card so that we can keep track of our attendance. They are located in the pew racks in front of you.

The Lord's Supper is celebrated every Sunday at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as Christ our Lord says, He gives into our mouths not only bread and wine, but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:26-29). And through this sacrament, He strengthens us for new life in Him (Romans 8:10;1 Peter 2:4). Jesus personally invites weak sinners (Mark 9:24) who trust His words, "This is My body which is given for you… this cup is the new covenant in My blood which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19-20), to receive His blessings of forgiveness, life and salvation. (Romans 8:31-32).
Because "he who eats and drinks our Lord's body and blood in an unworthy manner drinks judgement to oneself" (1 Corinthians 11:29), and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith by those gathered at this altar (1 Cor.10:17;11:26), any who have not been instructed, or who hold a confession and church fellowship differing from that of this congregation, and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and desire to receive the Sacrament, should first arrange to speak with the pastor. For further study, see Matthew 10:32f.; 18:15–35; 26:26–29; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-20; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:14-21;11:17–34.

A PRAYER UPON ENTERING CHURCH - Into the darkness, You bring light, and into my life, You bring lasting joy. Fill me with Your Spirit that I may rightly prepare and welcome the Savior promised and born for me, that in Him, Your joy may be known, and my joy may be complete; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, my Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

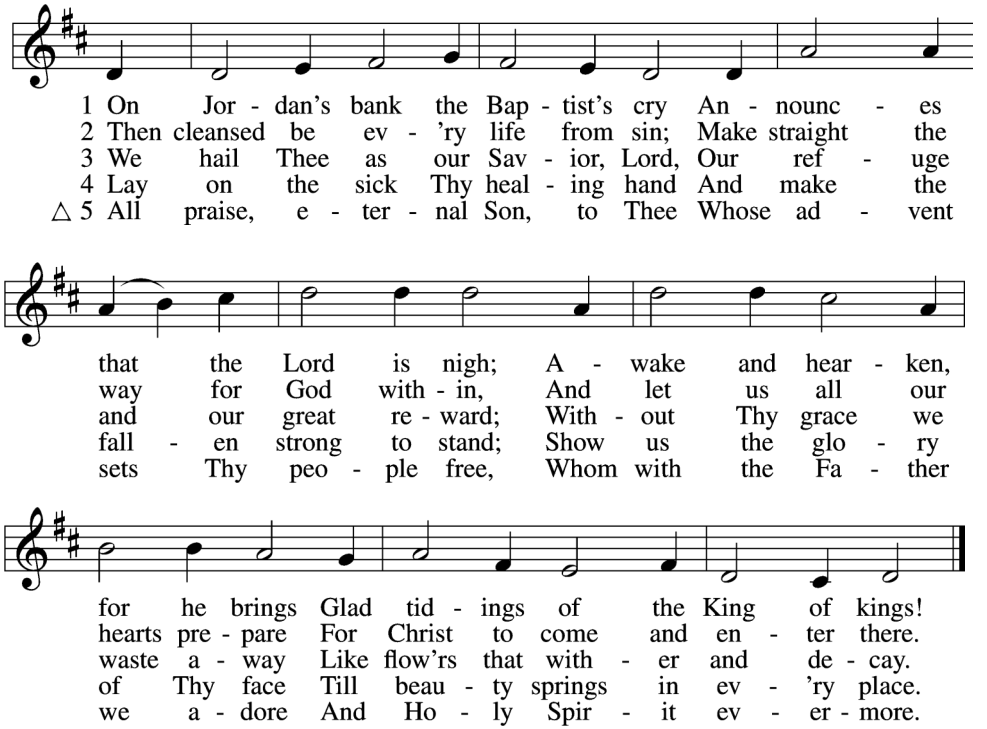
AS WE GATHER - Are you feeling the joy? At this point in the month of December, studies show that many people are not feeling joy. Many people are feeling over whelmed as they approach Christmas, feeling stressors that include not having enough money, missing loved ones, and anticipating family conflict. No matter how we come to our time of worship today, even if stressed, distracted, and frazzled, what great timing to hear what God speaks to us in this season and each day. From all our Readings today, we hear of joy! It is a joy not based on our own momentary perspectives of how things should go, but rather a joy from God's eternal perspective for our sake and what has freely been done for us. As our Advent season continues, may our true joy be found in the one for whom we prepare—Christ, who was born for us and who is with us and for us and is today in our midst as He comes to us in the means of grace.

DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING THREE **PAGE 184**

PRELUDE (A quiet time for prayer and meditation in preparation for worship

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* **LSB 344**



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Please stand

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH John 1:5, 9; 15:10–11; Psalm 100:1–5

P We light the third Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh, and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

C The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

P The third, pink Advent candle has been known as the shepherd candle or the candle of joy. The third Sunday of Advent is known also as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete in Latin means "rejoice," as found in Philippians 4:4. We find our joy in Christ this season and always as

(Continue on next page)

we prepare to celebrate His birth. Jesus affirms the joy found only in Him as we remain connected to Him: "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

C The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

P Guided by the light of joy, we respond with the psalmist: "Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!

C Know that the LORD, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

P Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise!

C Give thanks to Him; bless His name!

P For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever,

C and His faithfulness to all generations."

Three Advent candles are lit.

HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* LSB 357; vs. 5–7

Text and tune: Public domain

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

(*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination*)

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +

INTROIT *Psalm 146:5–8; antiphon: Philippians 4:4*

P Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

C Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God,

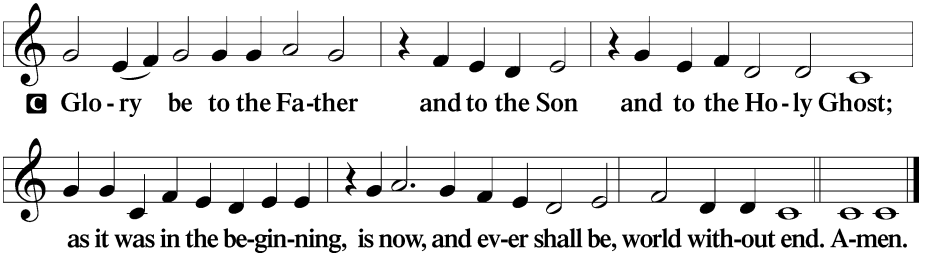
P Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps truth forever,

C Who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord gives freedom to the prisoners.

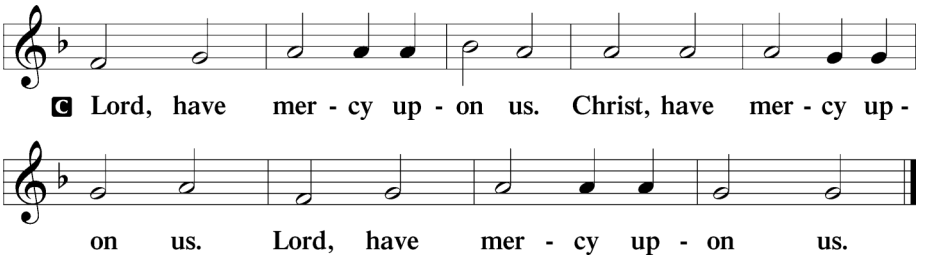
P The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord raises those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

C Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

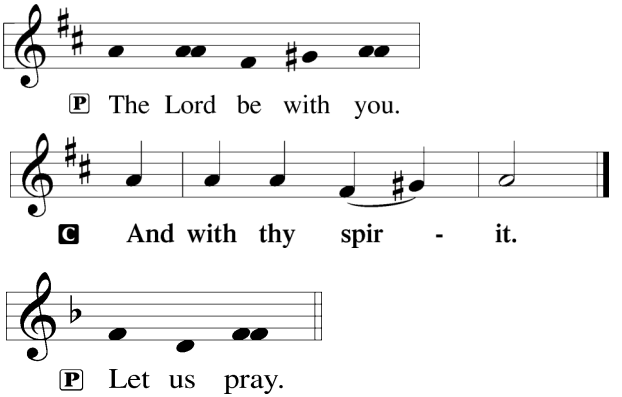
GLORIA PATRI



KYRIE



SALUTATION and PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Please sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Zephaniah 3:14–20*
(The joy and restoration of God's people)

14 Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! 15 The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You shall see disaster no more.
16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Do not fear; Zion, let not your hands be weak.
17 The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing."
18 "I will gather those who sorrow over the appointed assembly, who are among you, to whom its reproach is a burden. 19 Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will

save the lame, and gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and fame In every land where they were put to shame. 20 At that time I will bring you back, even at the time I gather you; for I will give you fame and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I return your captives before your eyes," says the Lord.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God

PSALM *Psalm 85; antiphon: v. 2*

P You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin.

C Lord, You have been favorable to Your land; You have brought back the captivity of Jacob.

P You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin.

C You have taken away all Your wrath; You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger.

P Restore us, O God of our salvation, and cause Your anger toward us to cease.

C Will You be angry with us forever? Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

P Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?

C Show us Your mercy, Lord, and grant us Your salvation.

P I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

C Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land.

P Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed.

C Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

P Yes, the Lord will give what is good; and our land will yield its increase.

C Righteousness will go before Him, and shall make His footsteps our pathway.

P You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin.

EPISTLE *Philippians 4:4–7*

(Joy in and through Christ)

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!
5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.
6 Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please stand

ALLELUIA

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 7:18–35*

(Messengers from John the Baptist)

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke , the seventh chapter.

18 Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. 19 And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

20 When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' " 21 And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.

22 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. 23 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

24 When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 25 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. 26 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 27 This is he of whom it is written:

'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way
before You.'

28 For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

29 And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

31 And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? 32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:

'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we mourned to you,
And you did not weep.'

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' 34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' 35 But wisdom is justified by all her children."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

NICENE CREED

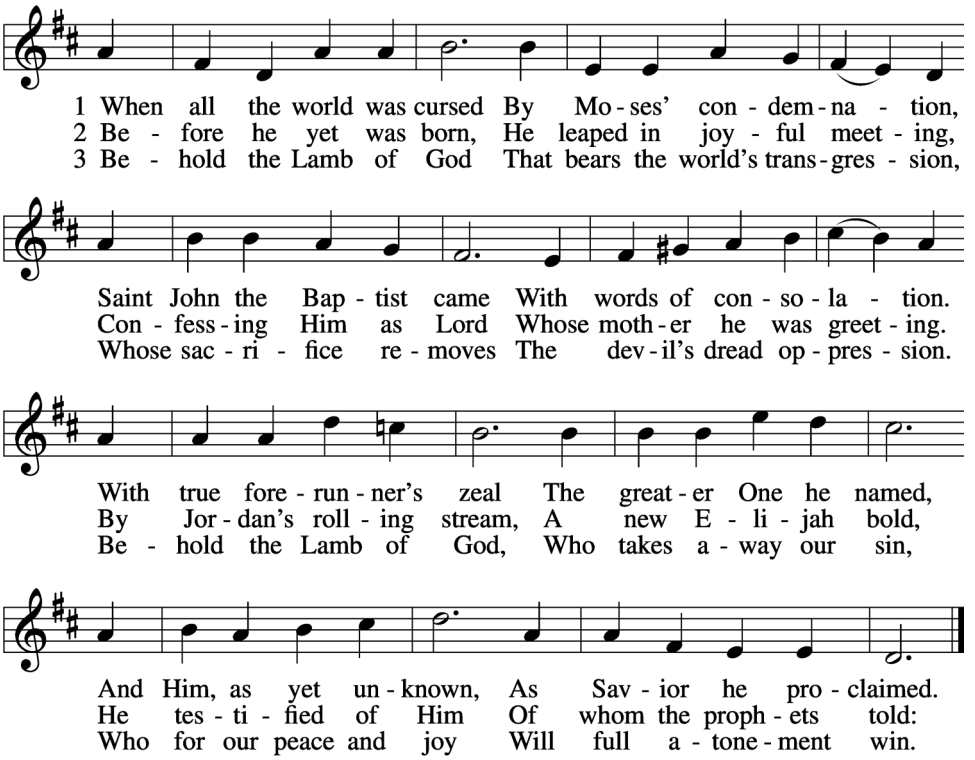
All: ***I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.***

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Please sit

HYMN OF THE DAY *When All the World Was Cursed* **LSB 346**



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4 O grant, dear Lord of love,
That we receive, rejoicing,
The word proclaimed by John,
Our true repentance voicing,
That gladly we may walk
Upon our Savior's way
Until we live with Him
In His eternal day.

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SERMON ***"Straight from the mouth of God"*** Luke 7:22-23

OFFERING

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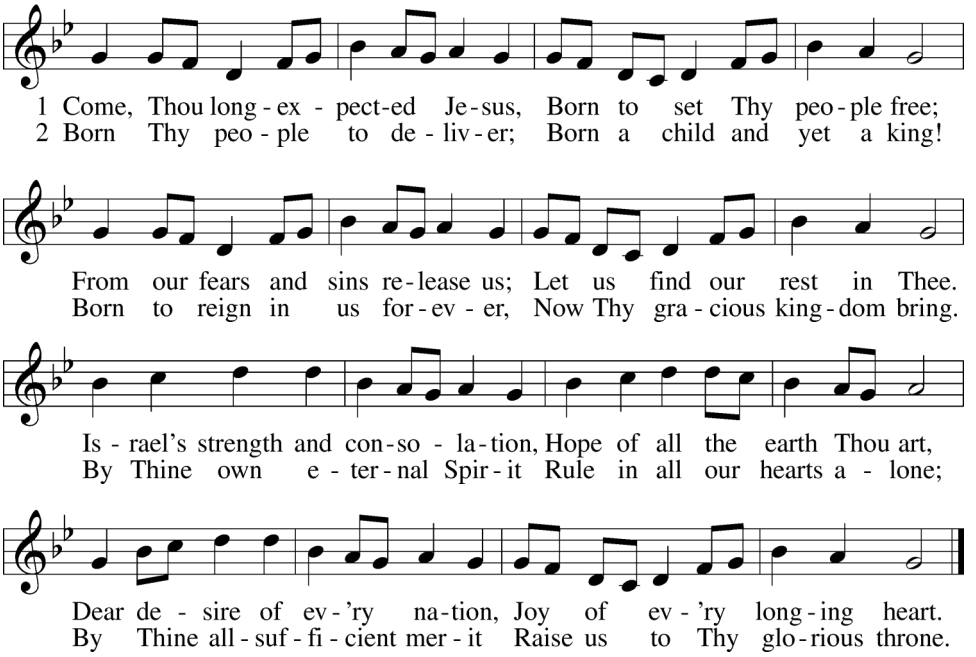
OFFERTORY *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* **LSB 338**



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SHARING OF THE PEACE *"Peace be with you"*
[through use of American Sign Language]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH *Philippians 4:4*

P Let us pray for the church, for the people of God, and for all people according to their needs.

We praise You, O Lord, for the joys You have given us in this life. For each day You grant us in this life, we rejoice in You always,

C **again I will say, Rejoice.**

P For the opportunities You give us to share Your Word to children, family, friends, neighbors, and communities, and for the privilege we carry to model Your love and to give a reason for the hope that we have, we rejoice in You always,

C **again I will say, Rejoice.**

P For those who face their days with struggle and sorrows, especially those who ask for our prayers, [including . . .], that even though in this world we have trouble, we take heart that Christ has overcome the world. We rejoice in You always,

C **again I will say, Rejoice.**

P For those who serve our nation here and across the world in the armed forces, for those who keep our community safe through law and order, for those You use to make people well in times of physical and mental distress, and for all vocations in which the gifts and abilities You have given are used on behalf of others, we rejoice in You always,

C **again I will say, Rejoice**.

P For the uniqueness of the season of this wintertime, for the blessing of this Advent season of the Church Year as we prepare to welcome again the Savior sent and born for us, and for Your presence and blessings freely given to Your people each and every season, we rejoice in You always,

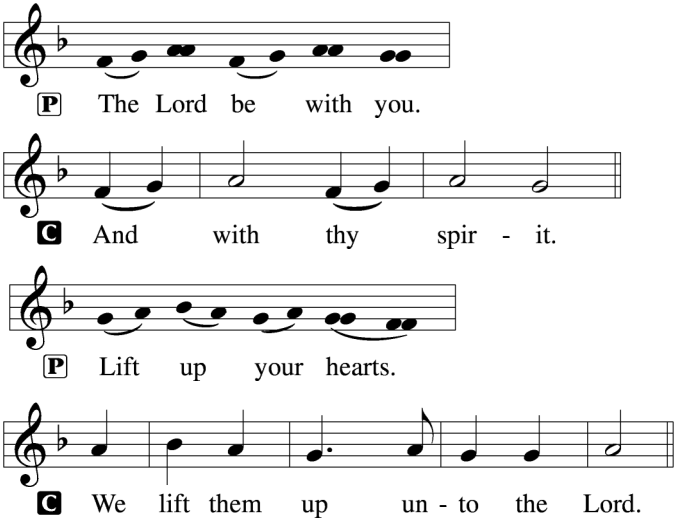
C **again I will say, Rejoice.**

P Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +

PREFACE



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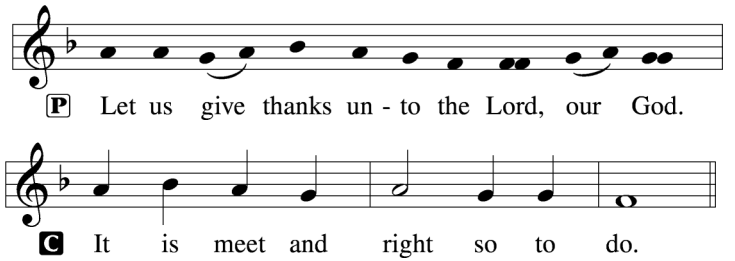
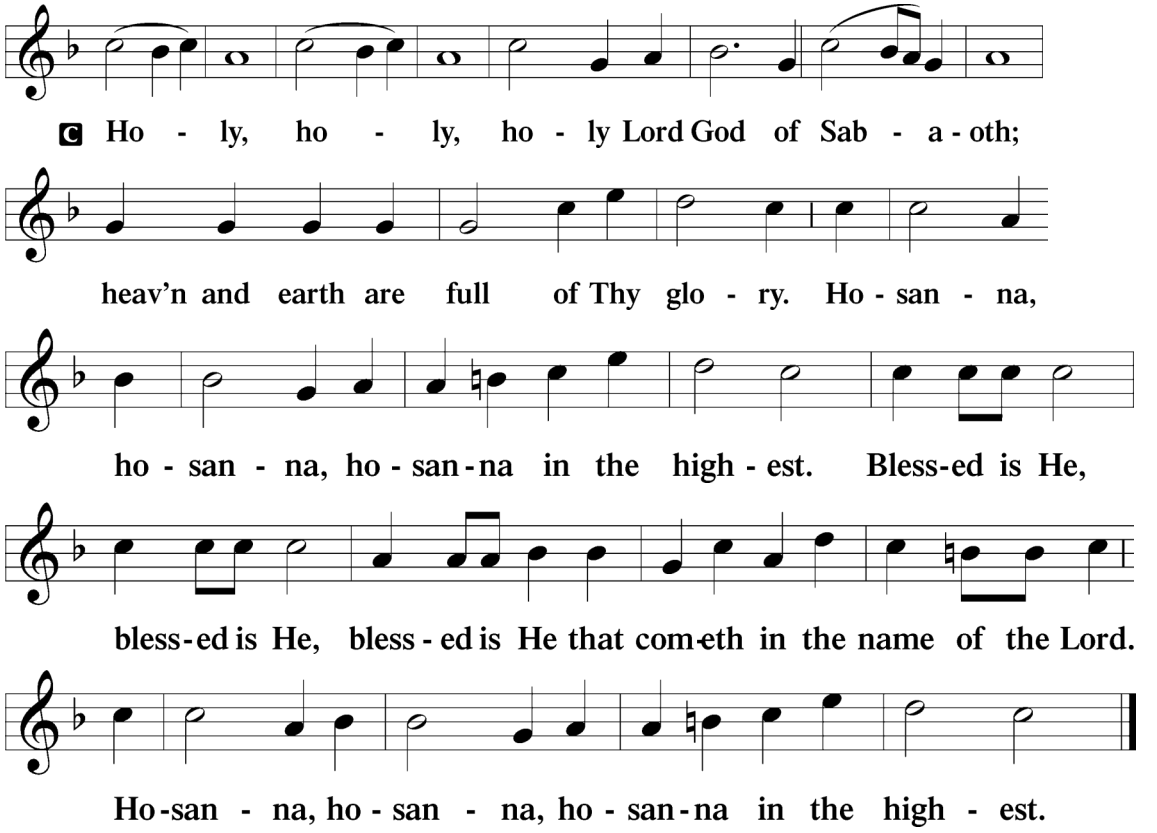


P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS



LORD'S PRAYER (*Matthew 6:9–13*)

C 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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

P In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI

AGNUS DEI

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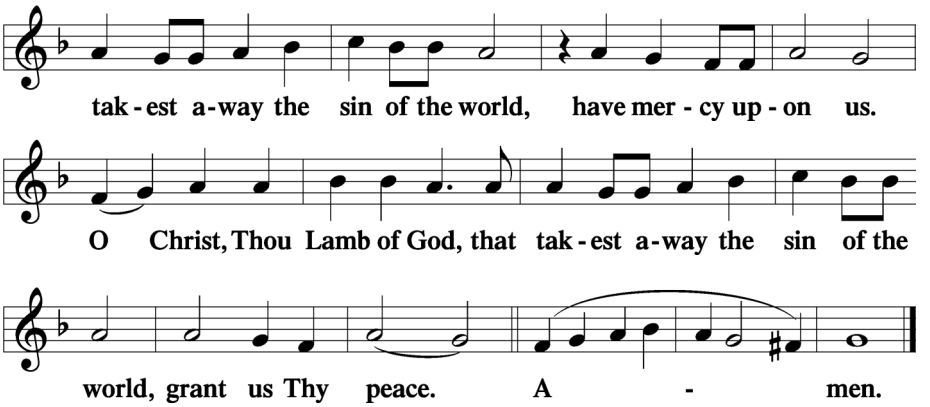

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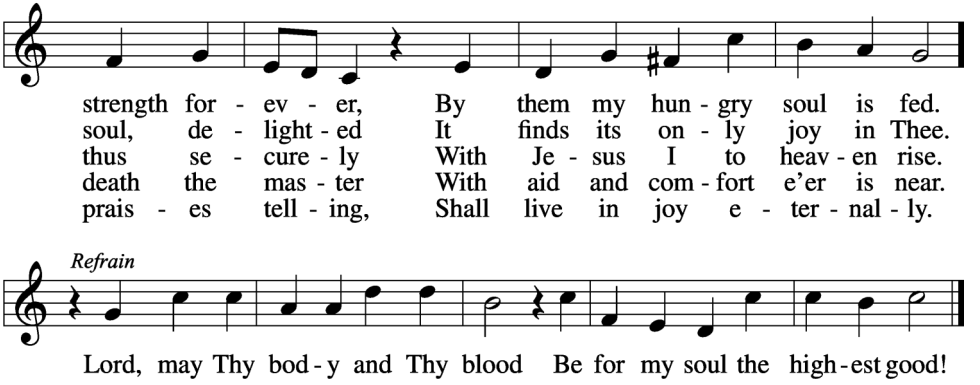
DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

SILENT PRAYER before COMMUNING

Heavenly Father, in my Holy Baptism you have called me to be Your own possession. Prepare my heart to receive the most holy body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of all my sins. Strengthen my faith, increase my love and hope, and assure me a place at Your heavenly table, where I will eat eternal manna and drink of the river of the water of life freely, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, my Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN *Thy Body, Given for Me, O Savior* **LSB 619**



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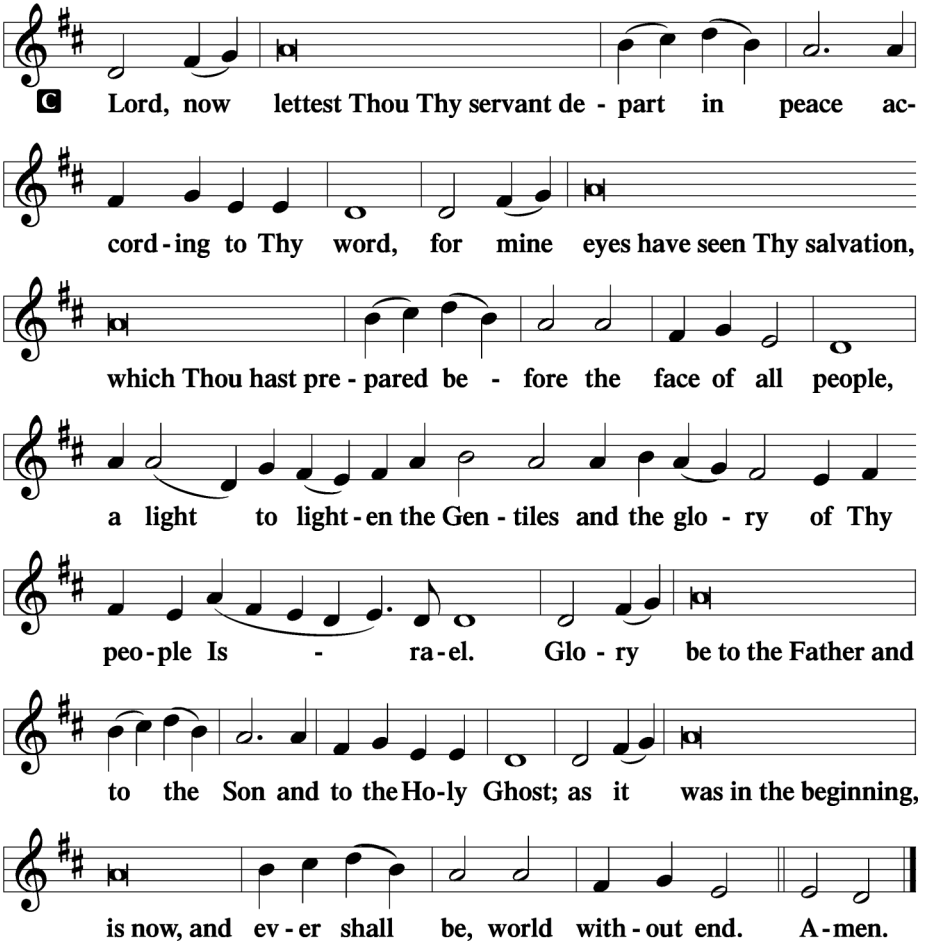
NUNC DIMITTIS



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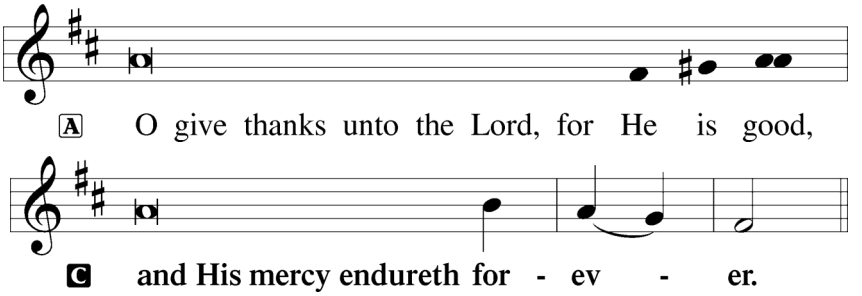
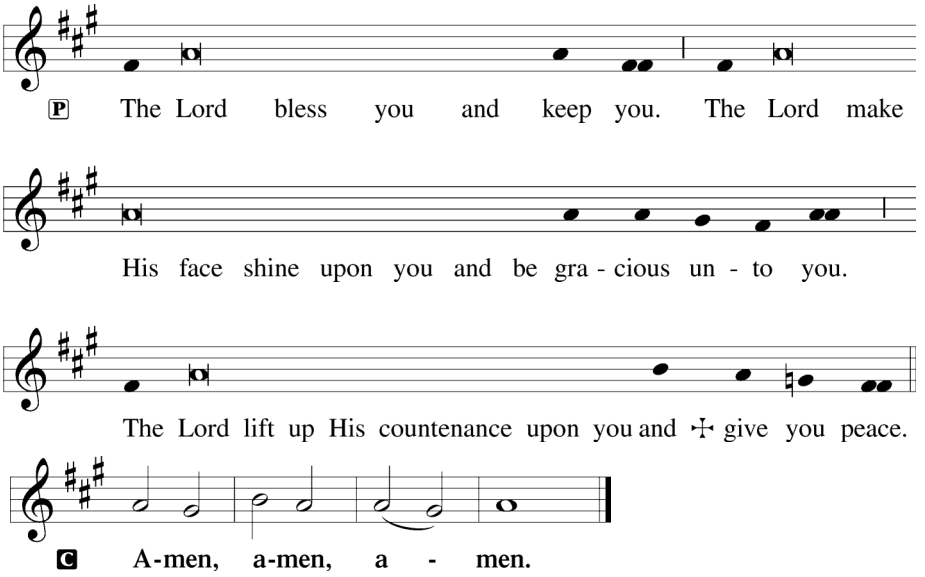


P Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

BENEDICAMUS

BENEDICTION



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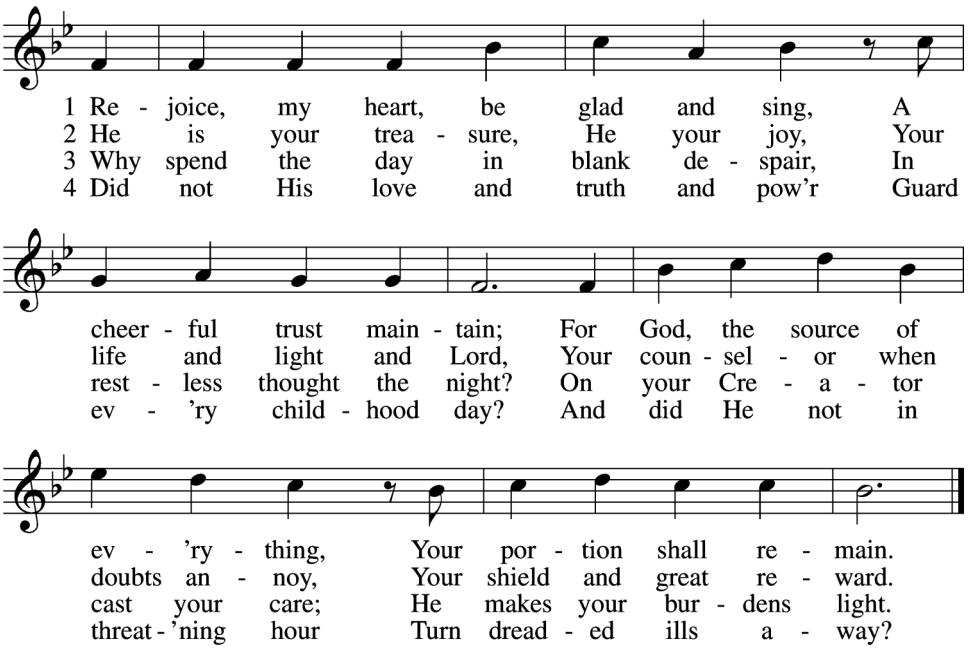
SENDING HYMN *Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing* **LSB 737**



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5 He only will with patience chide,
His rod falls gently down;
And all your sins He casts aside
In ocean depths to drown.

6 His wisdom never plans in vain
Nor falters nor mistakes.
All that His counsels may ordain
A blessèd ending makes.

7 Upon your lips, then, lay your hand,
And trust His guiding love;
Then like a rock your peace shall stand
Here and in heav'n above.

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DISMISSAL

P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Portals of Prayer for October to December 2024 are available in the Narthex or office.

Join us for **Sunday School and Bible Study** at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Rev. Goetz is leading the class.

December Activities

Family Confirmation Class, Thursdays @ 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Men's Fajita Night Bible Study Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 6 to 8 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Sign-up sheet is posted on church door.
(free will offering for dinner)

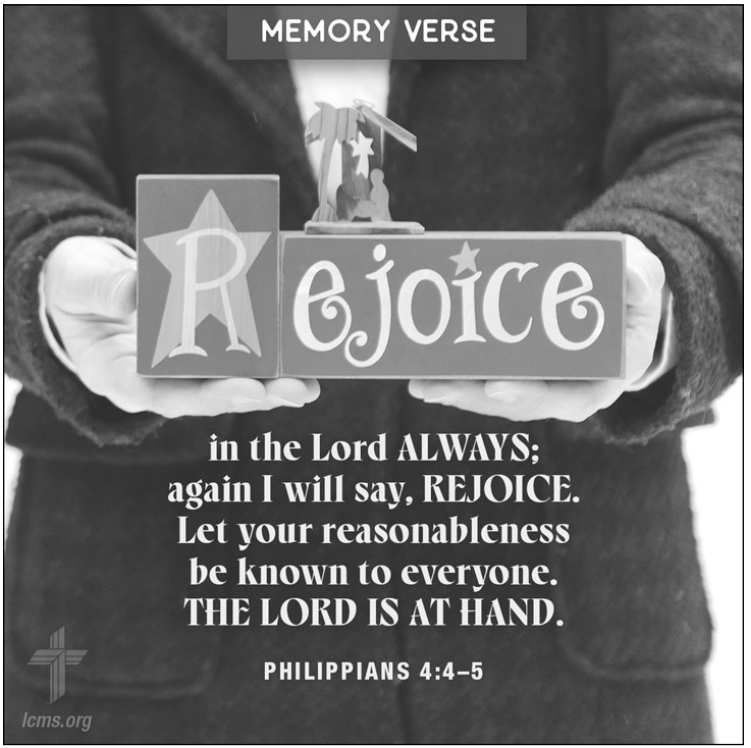
January Activities

German Polka Fest, Saturday, January 18, 2025 at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. (Sign up sheet posted on the church door.)

January 2025 Women's Retreat
Chosen : A Study of Esther
Friday, January 24th - 6 -9 p.m. and
Saturday, January 25th - 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
@ St. Paul Lutheran Church, 602 Morgan Blvd., Harlingen, TX
Registration is $50.00 Includes : Retreat materials, snacks, coffee and tea, & Friday night - catered dinner; Saturday - breakfast crumpets and catered lunch. For more info go to: **splch.breezechms.com/form/2025retreat**

Welcome back! You have been missed!

Memory Verse Challenge:
This week's



2024 Advent and Christmas Services

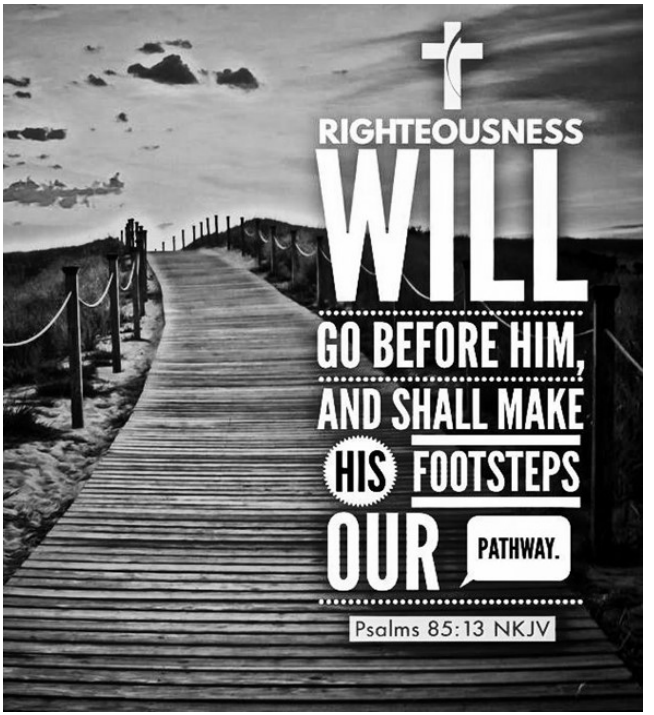
Sunday and Midweek Advent Services

Dec. 1	First Sunday in Advent	9 a.m.
Dec. 4	Midweek 1 Advent with Soup Supper at 5 p.m.	6 p.m.
Dec. 8	Second Sunday in Advent	9 a.m.
Dec. 11	Midweek 2 Advent with Soup Supper at 5 p.m.	6 p.m.
Dec. 15	Third Sunday in Advent	9 a.m.
Dec. 18	**Midweek 3 Advent** with Soup Supper at 5 p.m.	**6 p.m.**
Dec. 22	**Fourth Sunday in Advent**	**9 a.m.**

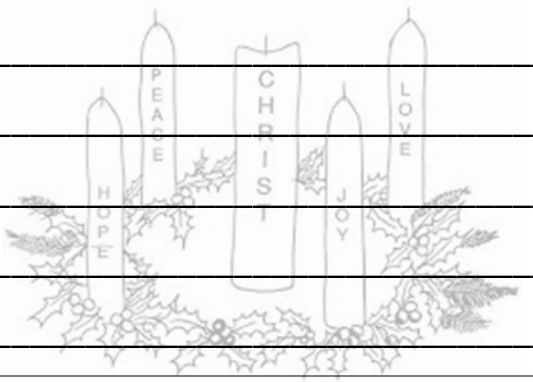
Christmas and New Year's Services

Dec. 24	**Christmas Eve Service**	**6 p.m.**
Dec. 25	**Christmas Day Service**	**9 a.m.**
Dec. 31	**New Year's Eve Service**	**6 p.m.**

12/4/2024	
Mid-Week 1 Advent Service 38	
Plate:	$ 67.00
Envelopes:	$ 198.00
Envelopes-Other:	
Total:	$ 265.00



Sermon Notes



The Coming of Jesus Enables Us to Rejoice

The Third Sunday in Advent has traditionally been called by the Latin word Gaudete, meaning "Rejoice!" For as you are called to repentance, so also are you urged to rejoice in the coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ. By His own cross, He has accomplished salvation for you; "he has cleared away your enemies," "taken away the judgments against you" and come to reign in your midst. Indeed, He rejoices over you with gladness and song (Zeph. 3:15–17)! Therefore, even from prison St. Paul encourages us to "rejoice in the Lord always," knowing that the peace of God will guard and keep us in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:4, 7). We find an example and encouragement in the case of John the Baptist. As he languishes in prison, he calls upon Jesus and is strengthened by the Word of the Gospel that he receives. The same good news is preached to you, by which all things are made new and even "the dead are raised up" (Luke 7:22). Do not be offended by the cross, therefore, but let your life be one of prayer and thanksgiving (Luke 7:23; Phil. 4:6).

12/8/2024		
Sunday Worship	**54**	
Plate:		$ 345.00
Envelopes:		$ 1,255.00
Envelopes-Other:		
On-line Donation:		$ 500.00
Memorial:		
Total:		$ 2,100.00
Bible Class: **27**		$ 26.00

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Micah 5:2–5a
Psalm 80:1-7
Hebrews 10:5–10
Luke 1:39–45 (46–56)

	Bi-Weekly Church Activity Schedule	
	December Sunday Servants	
Elder:	Ken Eilers	
Altar Guild:	Lori Marchant/Imelda Aguilera/ Donna Jackson	
Music:	Doris Pickering	
This Week	Third Sunday in Advent	
Usher:	Don Vogel	
Sunday:	Holy Communion Worship Service	9:00 am
	Sunday School & Adult Bible Study	10:30 am
Next Week	Fourth Sunday in Advent	
Usher:	Dan Wehling	
Sunday:	Holy Communion Worship Service	9:00 am
	Sunday School & Adult Bible Study	10:30 am