

# The Third Sunday of Advent

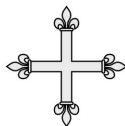
December 13 2020, 9:00 am



Saint Luke Lutheran Church and School  
9100 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD

[www.saintluke.us](http://www.saintluke.us) | 301-588-4363

*“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.*



## Gathering

### Prelude

Two Chorale Preludes on ‘Chesterfield’

arr. Michael Burkhardt (b.1957)  
arr. Jan Bender (1909-1994)

### Welcome

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,  
whose forgiveness is sure  
and whose steadfast love endures forever.  
**Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Loving and forgiving God,  
**we confess that we are held captive by sin.**  
**In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger;**  
**we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another.**  
**Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin.**  
**Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news:  
by God’s endless grace  
your sins are forgiven, and you are free—  
free from all that holds you back  
and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.  
May you be strengthened in God’s love,  
☩ comforted by Christ’s peace,  
and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

## Opening Hymn

ELW 239



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior  
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's  
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing  
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -  
bond - age held. The gates of brass be -  
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures  
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.  
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.  
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751  
Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

## 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.**

## Lighting of the 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 the third candle, 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.**

## Response

*Please sing the following to the tune HANOVER.*

The candle of hope we light in this hour  
Proclaims that the Lord is coming in power.  
We wait for a future, now hidden from view,  
When Christ in his glory will make all things new.

The candle of peace shines bright with God's plan;  
The wolf will lie down and dwell with the lamb.  
Our guns and our weapons, our hatred and war,  
Will give way to gardens that heal and restore.

The candle of joy reminds us to sing,  
For God is at work to do a new thing.  
The proud will be humbled; the lowly will rise.  
God's kingdom is one of delight and surprise.

Text: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette  
Music: HANOVER, William Croft (1678-1727)

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

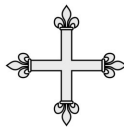
Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Augsburg Bells

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

*Freu Dich Sehr*, arr. Sandra Eithun



## Word

### First Reading

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

*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.*

The 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; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to 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. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For 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. Their 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. I 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. For 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.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm

Psalm 126

*The choir introduces the refrain; the congregation repeats it. Verses are sung by the choir. Subsequent refrains are sung only once by all, at the places indicated by **R**.*



- <sup>1</sup>When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,  
then were we like those who dream.
- <sup>2</sup>Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy. **R**
- <sup>3</sup>Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."  
<sup>4</sup>The LORD has done great things for us,  
and we are glad indeed.
- <sup>5</sup>Restore our fortunes, O LORD,  
like the watercourses of the Negeb. **R**
- <sup>6</sup>Those who sowed with tears  
will reap with songs of joy.
- <sup>7</sup>Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,  
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves. **R**

## Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

*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.*

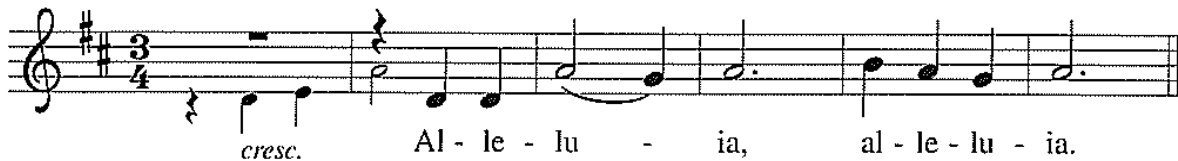
Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May 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. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Acclamation



*Choir*

Alleluia, alleluia.

**All**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

*Choir*

I am sending my messenger before you, who will prepare your way before you. (Matt. 11:10)

**All**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

## Gospel

John 1:6-8, 19-28

The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the first chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*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.*

There 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. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,  
'Make straight the way of the Lord,'"  
as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

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

**Sermon**

Pastor Miller

**Hymn of the Day**

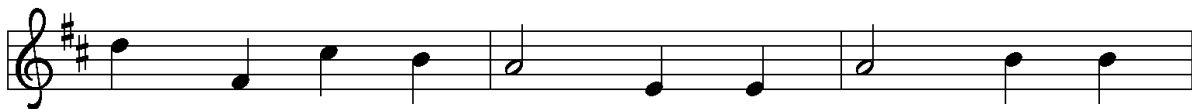
ELW 261



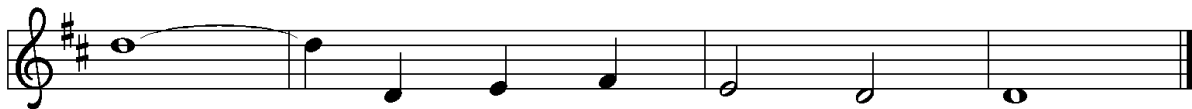
1 As the dark a - waits the dawn,  
 2 As the blue ex - pec - tant hour  
 3 As the moon re - flects the sun  
 4 Shine your fu - ture on this place,



so we a - wait your light. O Star of  
 be - fore the sil - v'ring skies, we long to  
 un - til the night's de - crease, may we your  
 en - light - en ev - 'ry guest, that through us



prom - ise, scat - ter night, lov - ing bright, lov - ing  
 see your day a - rise, whole and wise, whole and  
 heal - ing light re - lease, liv - ing peace, liv - ing  
 stream your ho - li - ness, bright and blest, bright and



bright, till shades of fear are gone.  
 wise, O lu - cent Morn - ing Star.  
 peace, un - to your ho - ly dawn.  
 blest; come dawn, O Sun of grace.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953  
 Music: LUCENT, Carl F. Schalk, b. 1929  
 Text © 1996 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.  
 Music © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

## **Apostles' Creed**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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.**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*After each portion of the prayers:*

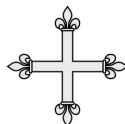
Hear us, O God,  
**Your mercy is great.**

*The prayers conclude:*

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

## **Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**





# Thanksgiving

## Offering

We invite you to give your offering online at [saintluke.us](http://saintluke.us) then click *Giving* or on the Give Plus app. You may also mail your checks to:

Saint Luke Lutheran Church  
9100 Colesville Road  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## *Music at the offering*

Jesu, joy of my desiring!  
in my heart I hold him fast.  
Jesu comes with grace untiring  
till all cares and grief are past.

Well I know that Jesu loves me,  
and his very life he gives me.  
Jesu I will not forsake,  
though on earth my heart should break.

Jesu, Joy of My Desiring!  
Text: Martin Jahn, ca. 1661

Music: from *Herz and Umnd und Tat und Leben, BWV 147*, J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

## Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

**God of hope and generosity, you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. We open our hands and return to you what you have first given us. Empower us to share our time, talent and possessions. Use them to bring peace, justice and comfort to the world; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

## Prayer of Spiritual Communion

Let us pray.

**Holy One, Jesus Christ, we know that you are as truly present in our reaching out to one another as in the sacrament of the table. We love you at the heart of all things, and long for you in our souls. Since we cannot gather together to receive you in that sacrament, come and abide spiritually in our hearts. Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace. Never let us fear that we are ever separated from you, from one another, from your creation. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and the life to come. Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

*Please pray in your own preferred language.*

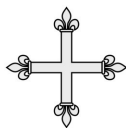
Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**Padre Nuestro Que estas en los cielos  
Santificado sea tu Nombre  
Venga a nosotros tu Reino  
Hagase tu voluntad asi en la tierra como en el cielo  
Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada dia  
Perdona nuestras ofensas  
Como nosotros perdonamos a los que nos ofenden  
Y no nos dejes caer en la tentacion mas libranos del mal  
Porque tuyo es el reino, el poder y la Gloria  
Por los siglos de los siglos. Amen**



## Sending

### Blessing

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,  
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,  
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey.

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**



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



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.  
 east, 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  
 Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates.

**Dismissal**

Go in peace.  
 Prepare the way of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

Carillon on “People, look east”

*Besançon*, arr. Rebecca Groom Te Velde (b. 1956)

## **WORSHIP LEADERS**

### **PRESIDING MINISTER**

The Rev. Connie A. Miller, *Senior Pastor*

### **ASSISTING MINISTERS**

The Rev. Franklin Morales, *Associate Pastor*

Deacon Kyle Warfield, *Director of Discipleship and Senior High Ministries*

### **MUSICIANS**

Dr. Alain Truche, *Director of Music and Organist*

Members of the Schola Cantorum

Sarah Pfanz, *soprano*

Tacy Downing, *alto*

Ralph Watkins, *tenor*

Jeff Jox, *baritone*

Members of the Augsburg Bell Choir

Sarah Butchko, Brock Butchko, Emma Holmquist, Emi Carlsperger, Karli Fisher

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