



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
EXCERPTS FROM “MESSIAH”

December 15, 2024 at 11:15am

**Saint Luke Lutheran Church and School**

9100 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD

www.saintluke.us | 301-588-4363

*Christ’s presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one “more powerful” than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. We celebrate this third Sunday of Advent with expectant joy through the gift of music.*

## THE GATHERING

**PRELUDE** • *French Overture from “MESSIAH”*

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

### WELCOME

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,  
alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.,  
**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of mercy,  
**we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.  
We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

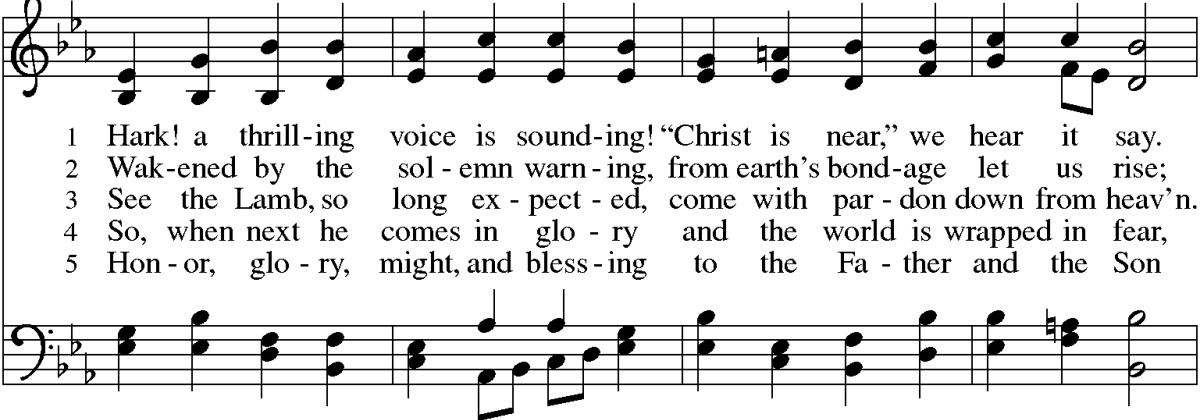
God of might,  
**we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors.  
We have trusted false promises.**

God in our midst,  
**we confess that we have sinned.  
We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

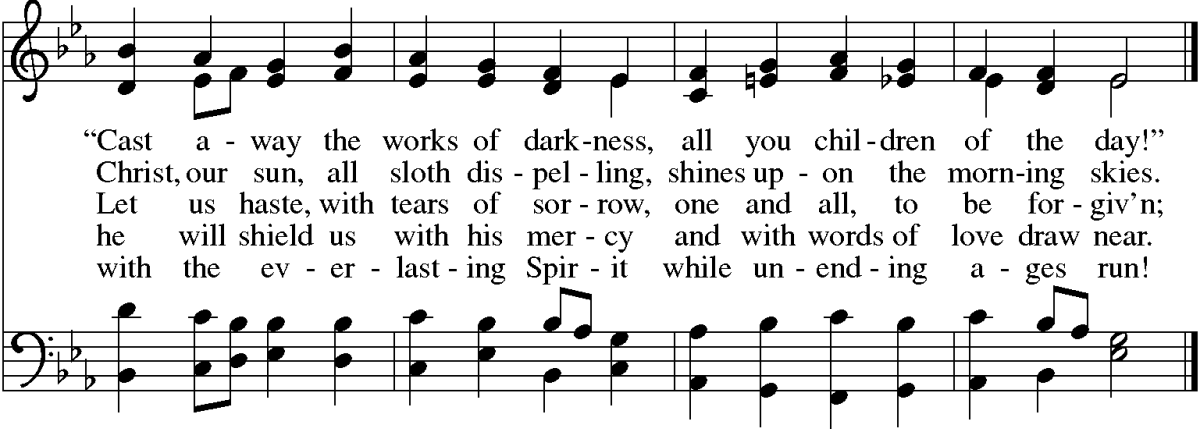
A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✠ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN • ELW 246**

**Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding**



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! "Christ is near," we hear it say.  
2 Wak-ened by the sol- emn warn- ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;  
3 See the Lamb, so long ex-pect-ed, come with par-don down from heav'n.  
4 So, when next he comes in glo-ry and the world is wrapped in fear,  
5 Hon-or, glo-ry, might, and bless-ing to the Fa-ther and the Son



"Cast a-way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!"  
Christ, our sun, all sloth dis-pel-ling, shines up-on the morn-ing skies.  
Let us haste, with tears of sor-row, one and all, to be for-giv'n;  
he will shield us with his mer-cy and with words of love draw near.  
with the ev-er-last-ing Spir-it while un-end-ing a-ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878

Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

**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 THE ADVENT WREATH

Let us pray.

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the third candle 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.**

## LIGHTING HYMN • ELW 248 *(Verse 3)*

People, Look East



*Advent 1* 1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing  
*Advent 2* 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is  
*Advent 3* 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the  
*Advent 4* 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.

*Please be seated.*

# THE WORD

## FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-5

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Recitative	<i>Comfort Ye, My People</i>	Tenor
Aria	<i>Every Valley Shall Be Exalted</i>	Tenor
Chorus	<i>And The Glory of the Lord Shall Be Revealed</i>	Choir

## SECOND READING

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like washers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years.

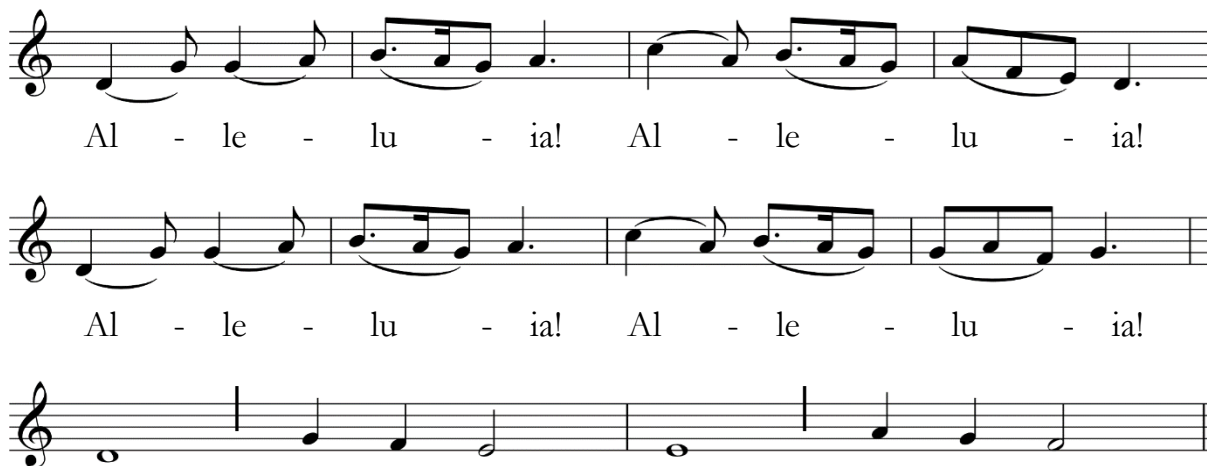
The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Recitative	<i>Thus Says the Lord</i>	Bass
Aria	<i>But Who May Abide the Day of His Coming</i>	Bass
Chorus	<i>And He Shall Purify the Sons of Levi</i>	Choir
Recitative	<i>Behold, A Virgin Shall Conceive</i>	Alto
Aria	<i>O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion</i>	Alto
Chorus	<i>O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion</i>	Choir

*Please stand as you are able.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION • Celtic Alleluia



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

The musical notation consists of three staves. The first two staves each contain two measures of music, with the lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia!' written below each measure. The third staff contains a single measure of music, which appears to be a continuation or a concluding phrase, with a double bar line at the end.

**All:** Alleluia.

Choir: I am sending my messenger | before you,\*  
who will pre- | pare your way.

**All:** Alleluia.

## GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-12

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room. Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please be seated.*

Recitative	<i>For Behold, Darkness Shall Cover the Earth</i>	Bass
Aria	<i>The People That Walked in Darkness Have Seen a Great Light</i>	Bass
Chorus	<i>For Unto Us a Child is Born</i>	Choir
Recitative	<i>And Lo! An Angel of the Lord Came Upon Them</i>	Soprano
Recitative	<i>And The Angel Said Unto Them</i>	Soprano
Recitative	<i>And Suddenly There Was With The Angel</i>	Soprano
Chorus	<i>Glory to God in the Highest</i>	Choir
Recitative	<i>Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion</i>	Soprano
Recitative	<i>Then Shall the Eyes of the Blind be Opened</i>	Alto
Aria	<i>He Shall Feed His Flock</i>	Alto & Soprano
Chorus	<i>Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth</i>	Choir

## OFFERING

We invite you to give your offering online at [saintlukegive.us](http://saintlukegive.us)

You may also mail your checks to:

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

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM • *Pastoral Symphony from “MESSIAH”*

George Frideric Handel  
*Orchestra*

## LITANY FOR ADVENT

Let us pray.

O Root of Jesse, through the house of David you came as the world’s Prince of Peace. During a season which can be caught up in busyness, give your whole church that calm and peace-filled heart.

**Fill us with peace.**

O key of David, your humble rule opens all that is closed. Grant wisdom and compassion to all who guide the nations of the world. Lead them in ways of righteousness so your justice may be made known among your people.

**Fill us with compassion.**

O Dayspring, illumine with your healing presence those who are ill, and embrace the families of all on this earth who are grieving losses this season. We also lift before you all who seek refuge from any kind of violence, and all who witness the horror of terrorism and war.

**Fill us with hope.**

O Ruler of Nations, you call all people of the world to the light of your love. As Mary trusted and gave birth to eternal hope, bless the ways we seek to proclaim that hope.

**Fill us with love.**

O Emmanuel, fill us with the sheer joy that comes to all who know God is with us. We give thanks for all your saints, and all who now dwell in your presence forever.

**Fill us with thanksgiving.**

We lift these petitions in the name of the one who taught us to pray:

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

*Please pray in your own preferred language.*

**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.**

## **BLESSING**

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light,  
God, our hope for the journey, ✠ bless and keep you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!  
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!  
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!  
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!  
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.  
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

*Refrain*

Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*  
 Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17<sup>th</sup> cent.  
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.



## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.  
Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE • *Prepare the Way, O Zion*

arr. Paul Fey

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## WORSHIP LEADERS

### OFFICIATING MINISTER

The Rev. Connie A. Miller  
*Senior Pastor*

### READERS

Rob Grace  
Margaret Neily

### LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Jon, Stephanie and Hannah Montgomery

## MUSICIANS

Adam Scott Graham, *Conductor & Director of Music*  
Alix Evans, *Mezzo-Soprano Soloist & Assistant Director of Music*  
Bethany Brookshire, *Soprano Soloist*  
Henry Woehlke, *Tenor Soloist*  
Sean Link, *Bass Soloist*

Moriah Swindell, *Violin I*  
Lerna May-Frandsen, *Violin II*  
Marta Samuel, *Viola*  
Leigha Daniels, *Cello*  
Kim Johnson, *Bass*  
Brenda Weiser, *Organist*  
Fred Marcellus, *Trumpet*

### Schola Cantorum

*Soprano Section:* Bethany Brookshire, Margaret Neily, Becky Unkenholz

*Alto Section:* Alix Evans, Tacy Downing

*Tenor Section:* Ellen Miller, Ralph Watkins, Henry Woehlke

*Bass Section:* Rob Grace, William Leader, William Schultz, Sean Link, Willard Unkenholz

## **POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS**

### **DEADLINE TODAY DECEMBER 15**

Have you seen the new kind of Christmas Poinsettia? It looks a lot like a gift card for food. Yes, like last year, instead of giving Poinsettias in remembrance or in honor of a loved one, we are doing the same with food cards.

Now more than ever the ministry of distributing food cards through the Saint Luke Food Pantry is needed more than ever.

Please consider giving a card, or cards, for food and know all dedications will be printed in the Christmas Eve and Day worship bulletins.

[Poinsettia Food Card](#) or [sl Dedication.us](http://sl Dedication.us)

## **REMINDER: CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

### **Christmas Eve**

**4:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Children's Creche (Christmas Story) Service**

**7:00 p.m. Misa Navidad (Worship is in Spanish)**

**9:00 p.m. Candlelight Service of  
Lessons, Carols, and Holy Communion**

### **Christmas Day**

10:00 a.m. Festival Worship

**10:00 a.m. First Sunday of Christmas, December 29**

**(One Service Only)**

## COMMEMORATIONS:

**Monday, December 16–Las Posadas:** This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the "posadas," or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.

**Friday, December 20– Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552:** Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.

## THIS WEEK AT SAINT LUKE

### SUNDAY, December 15–Third Sunday of Advent

7:30am Tech Rehearsal  
8:00am Schola Cantorum  
**8:45am Worship (Hybrid)**  
10:00 Welcome Gathering  
10:00am Up for Discussion (Hybrid)  
10:00am Sunday School  
10:00am Affirmation of Baptism Class  
**11:15am Worship (Hybrid)**  
12:30pm Creche Rehearsal  
5:00pm AA  
5:00pm Misa Español  
6:00pm Reception

### MONDAY, December 16

9:00am CDS Classes  
1:30pm CDS Aftercare

### TUESDAY, December 17

9:00am CDS Classes  
1:30pm Program Staff Meeting  
1:30pm CDS Aftercare  
7:00pm Reformation Handbells

### WEDNESDAY, December 18

7:00am Zoom Faith Connections  
9:00am CDS Classes  
9:15am CDS Chapel  
10:00am Women in Community

### WEDNESDAY, December 18

1:30pm CDS Aftercare  
5:30pm RSCM Choristers  
7:30pm Schola Cantorum  
7:30pm AA

### THURSDAY, December 19

11:00am CDS Christmas Worship and Reception

### FRIDAY, December 20

### SATURDAY, December 21

9:30am Quilters  
9:30am AA  
11:00am Al-Anon

### SUNDAY, December 22 Fourth Sunday of Advent

7:30am Tech Rehearsal  
8:00am Schola Cantorum  
**8:45am Worship (Hybrid)**  
10:00am Up for Discussion (Hybrid)  
10:00am Sunday School  
10:00am Affirmation of Baptism Class  
**11:15am Worship (Hybrid)**  
5:00pm AA

*NB: Worship Services are in person and livestreamed*