



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 15, 2024 at 8:45am

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.

THE GATHERING

PRELUDE • *In Thee Is Gladness*

Dale Wood (1934–2003)

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.

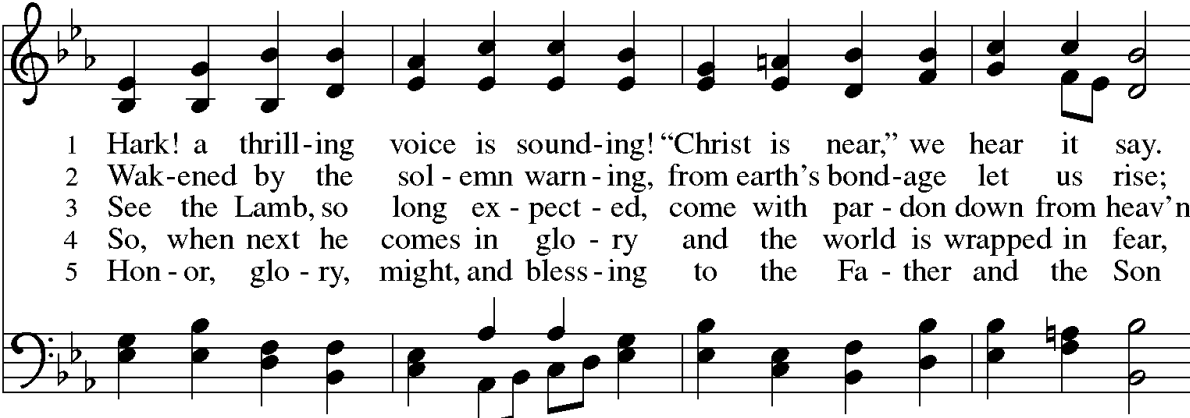
Silence is kept for reflection.

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.**

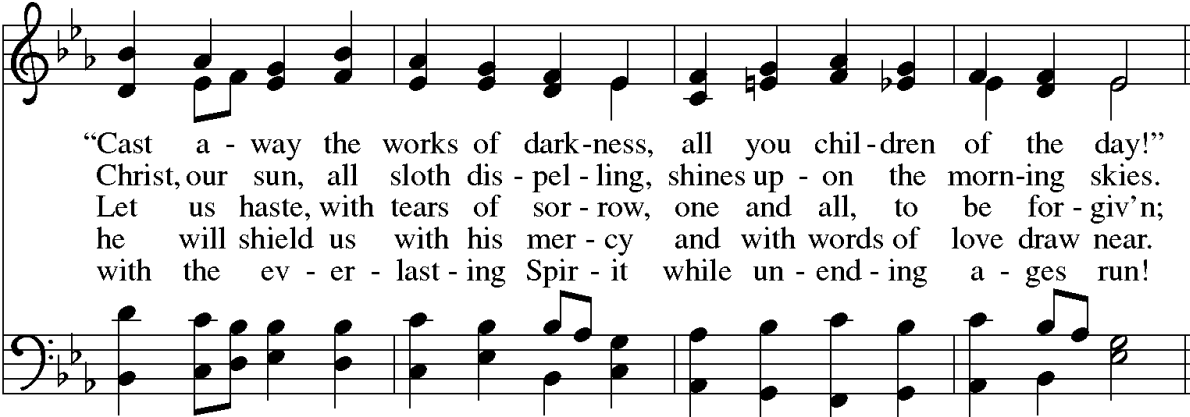
God of might,
**we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors.
We have trusted false promises.**

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.**



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.



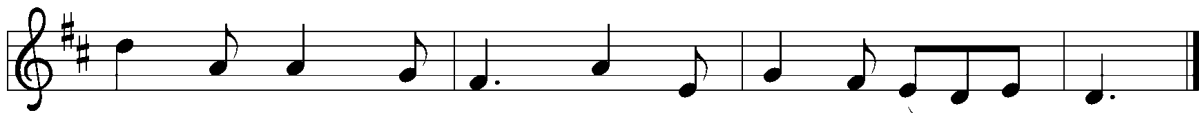
Advent 1 1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
Advent 2 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
Advent 3 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
Advent 4 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE WORD

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

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

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



1 Sure - ly God is my sal - va - tion,
 2 Thus with joy you shall draw wa - ter
 3 Tell the na - tions of God's glo - ry,



I will trust and shall not fear. God the Lord is
 from sal - va - tion's wells and springs. Sing your thanks to
 make this known in all the earth. Praise the Lord, the



strong and might - y, my sal - va - tion true.
 God Al - might - y for these won - drous deeds.
 God of Is - rael, call up - on God's name.

Refrain



Shout a-loud and sing for joy, O daugh-ter Zi - on!



Great in your midst is the Lord, the Ho - ly One!



Shout a-loud and sing for joy, O daugh-ter Zi - on!



Great in your midst is the Lord, the Ho - ly One!

Text: Zebulon M. Highben, b. 1979, based on Isaiah 12:2-6

Music: YISREAL V'ORAITA, Hasidic melody

Text © 2009 Augsburg Fortress

SECOND READING

Philippians 4:4-7

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

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

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Celtic Alleluia

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

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

All: Alleluia.

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

All: Alleluia.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 3:7-18

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

The holy gospel according to Saint Luke, the third chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Abarno

Please stand as you are able.



1 In thee is glad-ness a - mid all sad - ness, Je - sus, sun - shine of my
2 Je - sus is ours! . . . We fear no pow - ers, not of earth or sin or



heart. By thee are giv - en the gifts of heav - en, thou the
death. He sees and bless - es in worst dis - tress - es; he can



true re - deem - er art. Our souls thou wak - est; our bonds thou
change them with a breath. Where-fore the sto - ry tell of his



break - est. Who trusts thee sure - ly has built se - cure - ly
glo - ry with heart and voic - es; all heav'n re - joic - es



and stands for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! Our hearts are
in him for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia! We shout for



pin - ing to see thy shin - ing, dy - ing or liv - ing,
glad - ness, tri - umph o'er sad - ness, love him and praise him



to thee are cleav - ing; naught can us sev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!
and still shall raise him glad hymns for - ev - er: Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Johann Lindemann, 1549-1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

Music: IN DIR IST FREUDE, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, 1556-1622

APOSTLE'S 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

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us,
let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

After each portion of the prayers:

God of hope,
receive our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

Saviour of the nations, come, and receive these prayers
and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

PEACE

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

All may share a sign of Peace.

Please be seated.

THE MEAL

OFFERING

We invite you to give your offering online at saintlukegive.us
You may also mail your checks to:

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

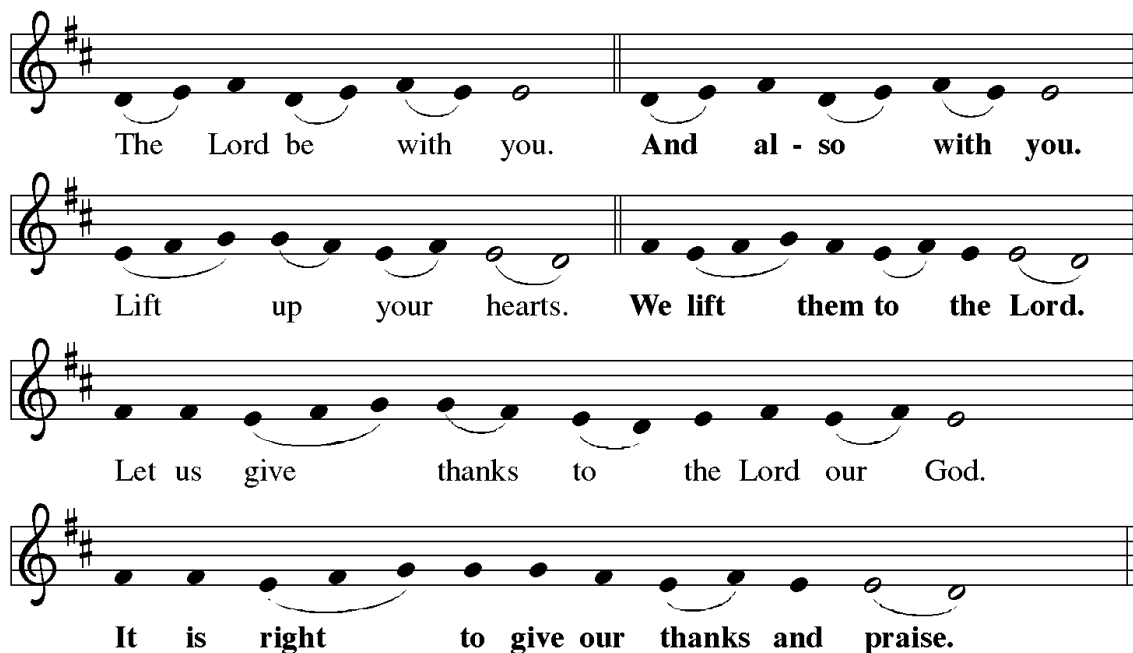
OFFERING PRAYER

Please stand as you are able.

Let us pray.

Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

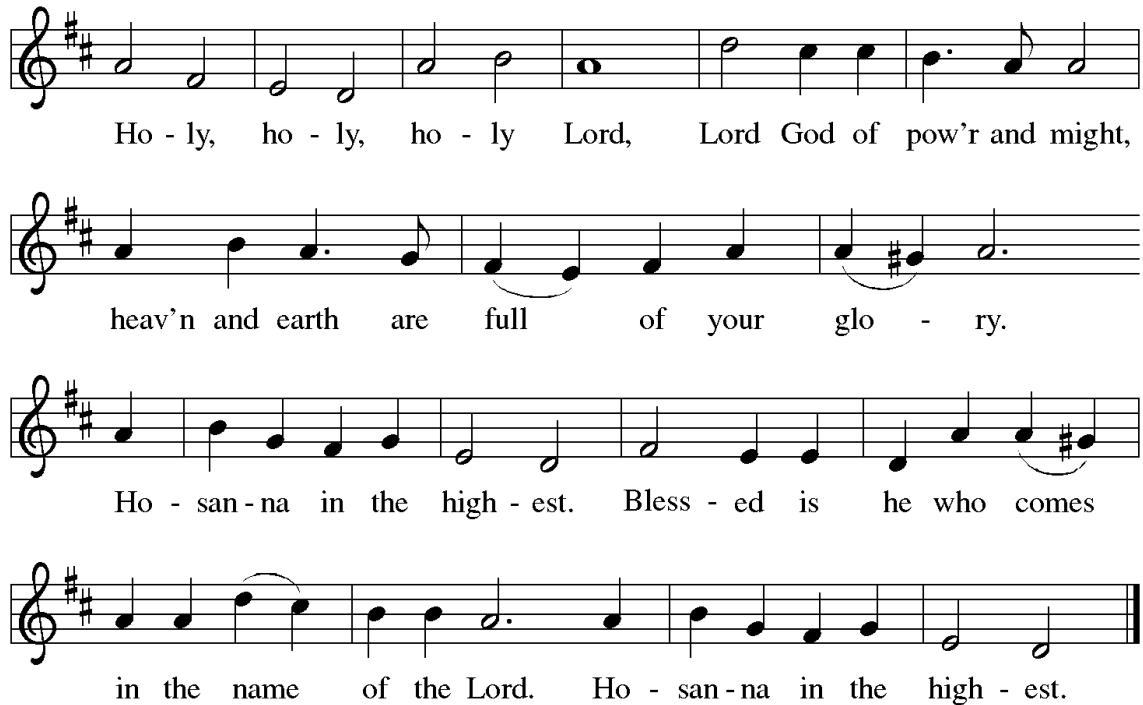
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The first staff has a double bar line in the middle. The second staff also has a double bar line in the middle. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS • ELW Setting Four



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold, God is making all things new. Take your place in the new creation.

Thanks be to God!

Please be seated.

COMMUNION

All are invited to the Lord's table, a table of grace and mercy. There are stations at the foot of the chancel steps.

Please stretch out your hand, palm up, to receive the host, the body of Christ.

(Gluten-free wafers are available; please ask your server)

Then receive in the individual cup the blood of Christ. You may deposit your cup in the basket near the side wall. Those who wish to receive a blessing instead of the Lord's supper are also encouraged to come forward. Those who wish to receive the sacrament in the pew, please inform an usher. All are welcome to the Lord's table.

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say:

The body of Christ, given for you. / The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may say: Amen.

AGNUS DEI • ELW Setting Four



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.



1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
 2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
 Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957

Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen

Text & Music © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

Please stand as you are able.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you,
 and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Oh thou — that tell - est good ti - dings to Zi - on, Oh

thou — that tell - est good ti - dings to Je - ru - sa - lem:

Lift up your voice with strength, — Lift it up don't be a - fraid. Be -

hold — your — God. — A - rise, — and shine, — for the

light of the world is come. Be - hold — your — God! —

Text: Isaiah 40:9

Music: Kenneth W. Louis. Copyright © Kenneth W. Louis. Used with Permission.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

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.

CLOSING HYMN • ELW 264

Prepare the Royal Highway

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.

Continued on the next page

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, 17th 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

PRESIDING MINISTER

The Rev. Connie A. Miller
Senior Pastor

PREACHING MINISTER

The Rev. Eleanor Abarno

ASSISTING MINISTER

The Rev. Richard Zawistoski
Confirmation Pastor

COMMUNION SERVER

Gerson Vasquez

READER

Ralph Watkins

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Andy and Rex Boston

MUSICIANS

Adam Scott Graham
Director of Music

Schola Cantorum
Rob Grace, *Violin*

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.

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

**A NEW KIND OF CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA
DEADLINE TODAY DECEMBER 15**

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 go to www.sldedication.us

**HAT, MITTEN AND SCARF TREE
DEADLINE TODAY DECEMBER 15**



The Saint Luke Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) are collecting **new and warm** hats, scarves and mittens to distribute to children in need. These items will be collected in the Fireside Room. Look for the tree. Thank you.

**CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL WREATH SALE
DEADLINE TODAY DECEMBER 15**



Saint Luke Christian Day School is pleased once again work with Lynch Creek Farms to sell Christmas wreaths to support the CDS Scholarship Fund. Merchandise is shipped directly to the recipient. If you order now, you can choose a shipping date for November or December. The link to go directly to our fundraising page is <https://lynchcreekfundraising.com/campaigns/482867> or you can go to the website or call 1-888-426-0781. Please be sure to check the box that says Fundraising Campaign and put in the campaign number, 7087565. **CDS will earn 15% of all eligible sales.** Thank you for your support.

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
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