

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

Third Sunday in Advent

December 17, 2023

AS WE GATHER

Advent is the season of waiting! As we wait, we have a special job to do. We joyfully get ready for Jesus' arrival by remembering the ministry of John the Baptist, who came as a witness to Christ, the light of the world. John himself was not the light, nor was he the centerpiece of God's plan to save the world; no, John's life was dedicated to preparing the way before the Lord and to get people ready for Jesus coming to the rescue of His people. In many ways, we are invited to be like John. Through our personal witness to Christ in our interpersonal relationships with others, God is working through us so that others will come to know His Son. Our goal is not only to trust in Jesus for ourselves but also to let the world know that He is coming to save them too. And His soon-to-come arrival will be well worth the wait!

✘ PREPARATION ✘

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE – “Light One Candle”

(All God's People Sing – 163 Verses 1-3)

Light one candle for hope
He brings hope to every heart

one bright candle for hope
He comes! He comes!

Light one candle for peace
He brings peace to every heart

one bright candle for peace
He comes! He comes!

Light one candle for joy
Ev'ry nation will find salvation

one bright candle for joy
in Bethle'em's baby boy

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 118:24

Pastor: This is the day the Lord has made.

People: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

HYMN: “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” (LSB 344 - 5 verses)

On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
Awake and hearken, for he brings

Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be ev’ry life from sin;
And let us all our hearts prepare

Make straight the way for God within,
For Christ to come and enter there.

We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord,
Without Thy grace we waste away

Our refuge and our great reward;
Like flow’rs that wither and decay.

Lay on the sick Thy healing hand
Show us the glory of Thy face

And make the fallen strong to stand;
Till beauty springs in ev’ry place.

(please stand)

All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
Whom with the Father we adore

Whose advent sets Thy people free,
And Holy Spirit evermore.

INVOCATION AND OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: I waited patiently for the LORD;

People: He inclined to me and heard my cry.

Pastor: He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,

People: and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

Pastor: He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

People: Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: That we may rejoice in the great things our forgiving God does for us, let us together confess our sins before Him.

People: Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we do and by what we fail to do. Instead of looking to Jesus and following Him in faith, we have gone astray by disobeying Your Word. Instead of giving bold witness to You, we have kept silent and withheld Your grace

from others. For the sake of our Savior and King, have mercy on us. Forgive us and restore us. Guide us and renew us. Help us to walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.” Our faithful God hears our prayers and answers them, removing our sins from us and declaring us blameless in His sight through faith in Jesus Christ. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

✠ WORD ✠

INTROIT Psalm 85:8–9, 12–13; antiphon: verse 7

Pastor: Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,

People: and grant us Your salvation.

Pastor: Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,

People: for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints; but let them not turn back to folly.

Pastor: Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,

People: that glory may dwell in our land.

Pastor: Yes, the LORD will give what is good,

People: and our land will yield its increase.

Pastor: Righteousness will go before Him

People: and make His footsteps a way.

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Pastor: Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,

People: and grant us Your salvation.

KYRIE

Pastor: Lord, have mercy,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Christ, have mercy,
People: Christ, have mercy.
Pastor: Lord, have mercy,
People: Lord, have mercy.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers.
People: Enable our hearts to believe and our mouths to confess Your saving name;
Pastor: for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: Amen. *(please be seated)*

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11

(The Lord's righteousness will "sprout up before all the nations.")

1 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, 3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. 4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

8 "For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them. 9 Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the Lord has blessed." 10 I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as

the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

(Rejoice always.)

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not treat prophecies with contempt 21 but test them all; hold on to what is good, 22 reject every kind of evil. 23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HOLY GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

(please stand)

(The testimony of John the Baptist.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

19 Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. 20 He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." 21 They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the

Prophet?” He answered, “No.” 22 Finally they said, “Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” 23 John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, “I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’” 24 Now the Pharisees who had been sent 25 questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” 26 “I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. 27 He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.” 28 This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

THE NICENE CREED

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 be seated)

HYMN “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding” – (LSB 345 - 5 verses)

Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding!
“Cast away the works of darkness,

“Christ is near,” we hear it say.
All you children of the day!”

Startled at the solemn warning,
Christ, its sun, all sloth dispelling,

Let the earthbound soul arise;
Shines upon the morning skies.

See, the Lamb, so long expected,
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,

Comes with pardon down from heav'n.
One and all, to be forgiv'n;

So, when next He comes in glory
He will shield us with His mercy

And the world is wrapped in fear,
And with words of love draw near.

(Please stand)

Honor, glory, might, dominion
With the ever-living Spirit

To the Father and the Son
While eternal ages run!

(Please be seated)

MESSAGE: “A Voice Still Cries in the Desert”

John 1:6-8, 19-28

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(Please stand)

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs . . . Lord, in your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer**

Pastor: Into your hands, O Father, we commend all for who we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

OFFERING

If you are a **visitor** this morning, you are our guest. Please do not feel obligated to give as the offering plate is passed. The offering is an opportunity for **members** to practice faithful stewardship and to support the ministries of Christ's church. Also, a red booklet, the Friendship Register, will be passed down each row. Please record your presence with us today.

OFFERING SONG: “We Give Thee But Thine Own” (LSB 781 vv. 1-2)

(Please sing as the offering is presented at the Altar)

We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

May we Thy bounties thus As stewards true receive
And gladly, as Thou blessest us, To Thee our firstfruits give!

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

(please stand)

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give 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 our sin, giving witness to the light of the world, whose coming scatters the darkness of death. 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

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of Sabaoth adored;

Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.

Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;

Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and have given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

People: In Your boundless mercy You sent Your witness, John the Baptist, to point us toward Christ and His coming kingdom.

Pastor: With thankful hearts we pray, “Come, Lord Jesus,” confident that in His body and blood, given us to eat and drink, we receive the forgiveness of sins and so proclaim His death until He comes again in glory. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **Amen**

AGNUS DEI

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,

You take the sin of the world away;

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,

Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,

You take the sin of the world away;

Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,

And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

(please be seated)

HYMN: “The Lamb” (LSB 547 – 5 verses)

The Lamb, the Lamb,

O Father, where’s the sacrifice?

Faith sees, believes

God will provide the Lamb of price! **Refrain**

Refrain: Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me His own!

The Lamb is reigning on His throne!

The Lamb, the Lamb,
The Lamb, the Lamb,

One perfect final offering.
Let earth join heav'n His praise to sing. *Refrain*

The Lamb, the Lamb,
So still, His will

As wayward sheep their shepherd kill
On our behalf the Law to fill. *Refrain*

He sighs, He dies,
He lives, forgives,

He takes my sin and wretchedness.
He gives me His own righteousness. *Refrain*

He rose, He rose,
His song prolong

My heart with thanks now overflows.
Till ev'ry heart to Him belong. *Refrain*

HYMN: "Hark the Glad Sound" (LSB 349 – 4 verses)

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne

The Savior promised long;
And ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release,
The gates of brass before Him burst,

In Satan's bondage held.
The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
And with the treasures of His grace

The bleeding soul to cure,
To enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring

Thy welcome shall proclaim,
With Thy beloved name.

HYMN: "When All the World Was Cursed" (LSB 346 – 4 verses)

When all the world was cursed
Saint John the Baptist came
With true forerunner's zeal
And Him, as yet unknown,

By Moses' condemnation,
With words of consolation.
The greater One he named,
As Savior he proclaimed.

Before he yet was born,
Confessing Him as Lord
By Jordan's rolling stream,
He testified of Him

He leaped in joyful meeting,
Whose mother he was greeting.
A new Elijah bold,
Of whom the prophets told:

Behold the Lamb of God
Whose sacrifice removes
Behold the Lamb of God,
Who for our peace and joy

That bears the world's transgression,
The devil's dread oppression.
Who takes away our sin,
Will full atonement win.

O grant, dear Lord of love,
The word proclaimed by John,
That gladly we may walk
Until we live with Him

That we receive, rejoicing,
Our true repentance voicing,
Upon our Savior's way
In His eternal day.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

(please stand)

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: Amen.

(please be seated)

HYMN "Tell Out, My Soul, The Greatness of the Lord" (LSB 935 - 4 verses)

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Tender to me the promise of His Word;

Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
In God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His name!
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;

Make known His might, the deeds His arm has done;
His holy name, the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His might!
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,

Pow'rs and dominions lay their glory by.
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of His Word!
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

Firm is His promise, and His mercy sure.
To children's children and forevermore!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

People: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSIAH PRAYER REQUESTS . . .

For continued healing – Judy Beauford - Steven Haberoth - Linda Fults

For Family and Friends

Prayers for healing for **Ardyne Knappick** as she recovers from a fall

Prayers for **Carol Mencke's family – Ron & Emily Pitchford** as they mourn her death this past Saturday as well as prayers for **safe travel** as Carol is returned to her home in Oklahoma

Prayers for healing for **Gloria Bloecher** who was recently in the hospital after a fall and heart attack
Leitko Family ask for prayers for **Katie Finny** who just gave birth (baby is doing well), Katie is having complications, we pray for her full recovery

Jim & Becky Behrens ask for prayers for **Lane Behrens, the 1-month-old son of Logan and Ashley Behrens, grandson of Jim & Becky Behrens**, as he is home recovering from RSV infection

Prayers for **Gus Addington** as he suffered a season ending torn ACL in a BHS basketball game. He is scheduled for reconstructive surgery on December 26th

Prayers for our **Mission Aviation Family - Will and Jennelle Wolf and their 3 children**

Rutledge Family requests prayers for Sister-in-Law **Heather Mulledy** battling breast cancer

Mario & Eve Betancourt requests prayers for **Reese Richeson**, daughter of friends, undergoing treatment for brain cancer

Donna Cifers requests prayers for her 89-year-old mother's health issues – **Margaret Chamness**

For Messiah's Call Committee and the Pastor God is preparing for us

Prayers for Justice & Peace in the Middle East

For family discord, reconciliation, and healing

Prayers for rescue for those in abusive relationships

Prayers for all those with physical, emotional, or other needs – your will be done

Prayers for all who are lost to hear and receive Jesus' Gospel message

We pray in Jesus's Holy Name, Amen.

DECEMBER ALTAR FLOWERS

Dec. 3rd - Steve & Janet Haberoth – in thanksgiving of God's Blessings

Dec. 10th – Bill & Linda Dicke – honoring Linda's Birthday

Dec. 10th – Kathleen Blakely – in memory of mom Polly Mohnke on her 100th Birthday {Dec. 9th}

Dec. 17th – Dennis & Sue Parker – in memory of Doug's Birthday

Dec. 24th – Kim & Maurine Maloy – in memory of those who have gone before us

Dec. 24th – Terry Chhabra – in loving memory of her parents Randall & Carlotta Burns,

Amanda Addington's Grandparents, Gus & Luke's Great Grandparents

Dec. 31st – Bill & Sharon Loren - in thanksgiving for another year of God's blessings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

WELCOME . . . *Whoever you are . . . Wherever you have come from . . . we are so glad you are here!* Your presence increases our joy as we praise our loving Savior together. If you are visiting with us today, we'd love to get to know you! Please don't forget to sign your name and fill in your contact information in the red booklets on the inside aisle!

LOOK UP! THE STAR OF PEACE DRAWS NEAR - *This Wednesday Dec. 20th we finish the star with the two points at the bottom of the star. First – **Peace is with people when they follow your directions.** If everyone would only listen to us and do what we say, there would be peace. We think of Jesus as the Messiah, the Prince of Peace. And yet, Jesus says in Matthew 10 that He has come bring not peace, but a sword to divide the world. What brings peace finally to the world? Jesus brings peace by stepping into the center of our troubled world, letting Himself be the focus of the world's anger. Therefore, **Peace is finding our Purpose.** All this work to get ready for Christmas – why bother? What will bring peace when so much is still undone? We find our peace rests not in our work but in following Him, the Prince of Peace. He filled the manger and the cross and there we find our peace.*

Pastor's Bible Study in the BEGIN Book - *Pastor will continue with The Gospel According to John.*

A special voluntary collection for Will and Jenelle Wolf is being taken up Sunday, December 17th and coming Wednesday (the 20th) by Mark Giardinelli to help them in their mission to the East Democratic Republic of Congo as a special Christmas gift. Thanks!

TODAY - **Multigenerational Christmas Card Making and Cookie Decorating** is scheduled for Sunday, December 17th, immediately following church service. Lunch will be served! For more information contact Kathy Giardinelli by text at 210-334-8820.

Issues, Etc. is a radio talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio in Collinsville, IL and hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken. You can listen to weekly studies of the Biblical texts, prayers and hymns of the day. Pastor Sean Daenzer of LCMS Worship leads us through the three-year lectionary. Pastor Will Weedon of "The Word of the Lord Endures Forever" leads us through the one-year lectionary. You can listen at your convenience at issuesetc.org, the LPR mobile app and your favorite podcast provider.

John ... came
as a witness
to testify
to the light.

JOHN 1:6-7, NRSV

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Serving us Today – December 17, 2023

Elders: Bill Eichman & Roger Winkelmann
Coffee: Shirley Moore
Treats: Shirley Moore
Tellers: Anthony Sansone
Chancel Care: Kim & Maurine Maloy
Message: Pastor Richard Lofgren
Kid's Message: Pastor Richard Lofgren
Musician: Bob Shoaf
AV: Rutledge Family
Reader: Pam Fields
Ushers: Allen Leitko – Anthony Sansone – Joe Sorensen – Mike Stender
Greeters: Alana Kemmy & Lindy Eschenko

Serving us Wednesday – December 20, 2023

Elders: Bill Eichman & Roger Winkelmann
Tellers: Anthony Sansone
Chancel Care: Kim & Maurine Maloy
Message: Pastor Richard Lofgren
Kid's Message: Pastor Richard Lofgren
Musician: Bob Shoaf
AV: Rutledge Family
Reader: Sharon Sattler
Ushers: *to be determined*
Greeters: Sue Theis & Melissa Rutledge

Our Response to God Last Week Wednesday Worship Attendance: 21

November 2023 Contributions			
General Fund	\$49,622.54	Building Fund	\$1,875.00
Renovation Fund	\$150.00	Family Life Center	\$4,100.00