

The Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 12, 2021
11:00 A.M.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH!

Plain text indicates a part of the liturgy led by a worship leader.

Bold text indicates the congregational response.

Hymn numbers refer to their corresponding pages in the back of the cranberry-colored *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnal.

Welcome

Prayer Requests

Prelude

People, Look East

arr. Robert Hobby

Blessing of the Advent Wreath

L We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
strengthen our hearts
as we await the Lord's coming in glory.

C **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**

ENTRANCE RITE

We stand as we are able.

Hymn 267

Joy to the World

Greeting

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

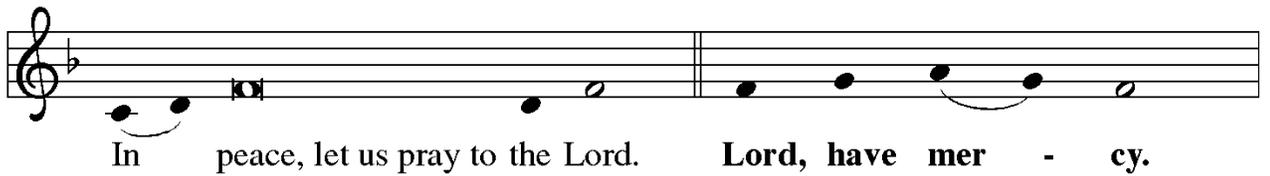
C **And also with you.**

The Advent wreath, which probably originated among early Lutherans in Germany, is a symbol of waiting and watchfulness during the weeks of Advent.

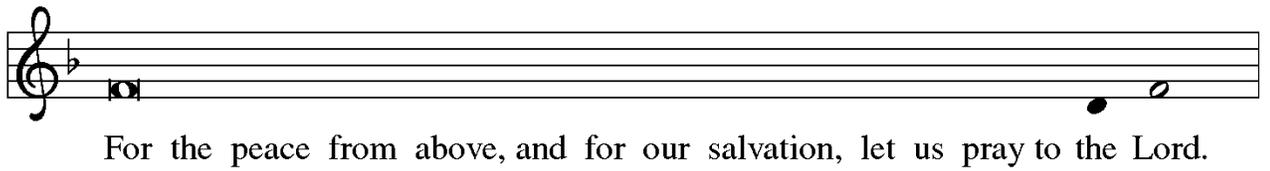
*Standing is the posture of the resurrection. We stand when we sing hymns and for other parts of the service as an expression of resurrection joy. It is a way of proclaiming that Jesus is powerfully alive!
Colossians 3:14-18*

Kyrie is the Greek word for "Lord." The church has prayed this prayer seeking divine help since the 4th century.

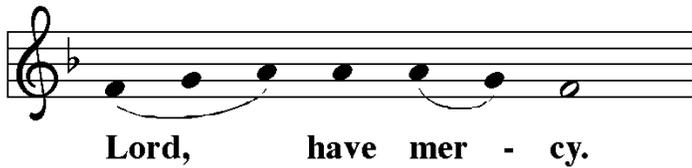
Kyrie



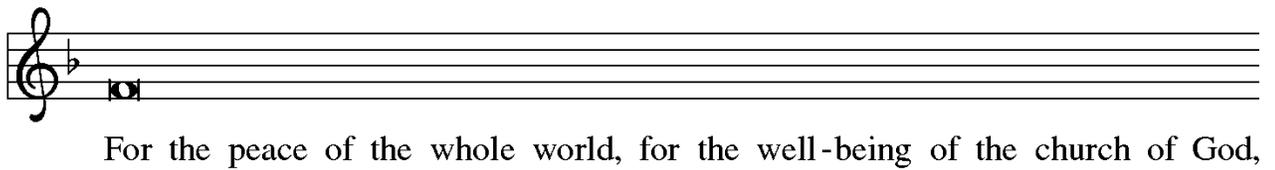
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



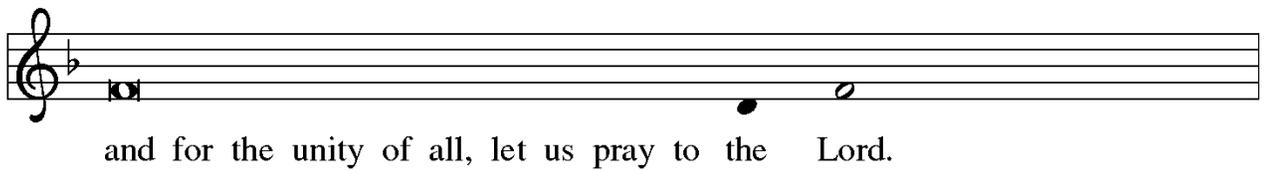
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



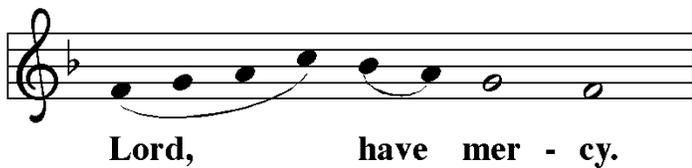
Lord, have mer - cy.



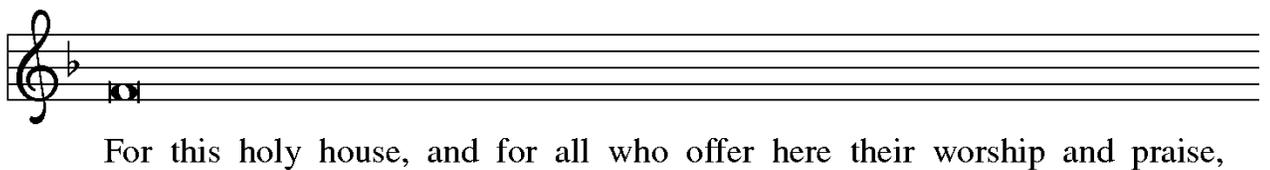
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



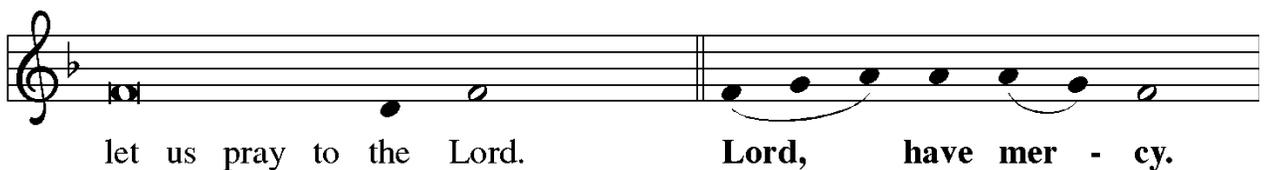
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

The Prayer of the Day is tied to the overall theme of the scripture lessons or, sometimes, to the theme of day if it is a special occasion in the church calendar.

The tradition of reading sacred scripture in worship is a tie to our roots in Judaism. 1 Timothy 4:13 reminds us of the importance of this practice.

The first lesson is normally from the Old Testament.

Prayer of the Day

P 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.

C Amen

We are seated.



LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

L A reading from Zephaniah.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The 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.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The 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
¹⁸as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I 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.

²⁰At 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.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The second reading, usually from the New Testament letters, bears the witness of the early church.

Second Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7

L A reading from Philippians.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

We stand.

Hymn

Hark, the Glad Sound!

1. Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior prom-ised long;
2. He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's bon - dage held.
3. He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed-ing soul to cure,
let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
The gates of brass be - fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
and with the trea - sures of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.

The Gospel Acclamation is the congregation's response to the announcement and reading of the Holy Gospel. It gives special focus to the Gospel, the principal and climactic biblical reading in the liturgy.

The Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3rd chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. 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. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

¹³He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴Soldiers 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."

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John 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 thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His 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."

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Liturgy of the Word culminates in the reading of the gospel and the sermon by which Christ comes among his people and speaks to us in our own context. Because of this we stand to listen to the good news of our Lord.

Hymn

Hark, the Glad Sound!

4. Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come shall pro - claim,
and heav'n's e - ter - nal arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

We sit.

Sermon

Pastor James Armentrout

We stand as we are able and sing the hymn.

This hymn complements the day's scripture readings and sermon.

Hymn

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.
 2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.
 3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,

Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with - in:
 Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com - ing day.
 come to bless with fire and fra - grance hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need.

seed of prom - ise, deep - ly plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
 Christ, the morn - ing star of splen - dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim.
 In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;

Like the soil be - neath the frost - line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.
 Heav - en's em - ber fans to full - ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.
 Child who comes to grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.

We join our hearts in prayer as we pray for the Church, for the well-being of creation, for peace and justice, for those in need. 1 Timothy 2:1-2

The Prayers



Each petition concludes:

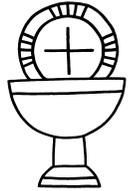
P Lord, in your mercy,
 C hear our prayer.

Much more than a pleasant greeting—we do this to proclaim God's promise of peace. 2 Corinthians 13:11

Our gifts are received and dedicated to our Lord's service. These offerings support the ministries of this congregation, the Virginia Synod, ELCA, and our global mission partners.

As our gifts of offerings and tithes are brought forward we sing a canticle of thanksgiving for God's generous goodness.

THE EUCHARISTIC LITURGY



The Peace

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

We greet one another from our pews, saying "Peace be with you."

The Offering

Anthem

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

arr. Nancy Raabe

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king;
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

- Charles Wesley

Offertory

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



In dark-est night his com-ing shall be, when all the world is de-spair-ing,



as morn-ing light so qui-et and free, so warm and gen-tle and car-ing.



Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in won-der,



the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and weap-ons be bro-ken a - sun - der.

Our prayer is modeled after the Jewish prayer of thanksgiving and dedicates the giver to a stewardship of all life.

Offertory Prayer

P Let us pray. God of our waiting and watching,
C we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives
to the service of all your people.
Prepare the way before us
as we meet you in this simple meal,
through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace Amen

The Thanksgiving Dialogue begins the part of our worship called the Great Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving Dialogue

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 dialogue and the Proper Preface are ancient parts of the worship which proclaim our thanks for the gifts of God in the meal.

The Proper Preface

The presiding minister continues: "It is indeed right ..."
The proper preface concludes: "we praise your name and join their unending hymn."

The Sanctus echoes the angels' cry in Isaiah 6:3 and the crowds of Mark 11:9 as Jesus entered Jerusalem. This reminds us that we are in the presence of a God identified both by holiness and humility.

Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. 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.

The Eucharistic Prayer recalls God's saving acts throughout history and, particularly, the words and actions, the commands and promises of Jesus at the last supper with his disciples as recorded in scripture.

Eucharistic Prayer

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
 Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
 Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
 Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
 Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
 Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
 Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
 the Word made flesh.

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.

P Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C **Christ has died.**
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

P With this bread and cup
 we remember your Word dwelling among us,
 full of grace and truth.
 We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

C Come, Lord Jesus.

P Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C Come, Holy Spirit.

P All praise and glory are yours,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever.

C Amen

The Lord's Prayer brings the Great Thanksgiving to a conclusion.

Prayed here, this familiar and beloved prayer becomes the table-prayer of the congregation. Luke 11:1-13; Matthew 6:5-15

The Lord's Prayer

P Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

Amen.

We are seated.



COMMUNION WITH OUR RISEN LORD
WELCOME TO CHRIST'S TABLE

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

We come forward by way of the center aisle, forming two lines to receive communion in front of the chancel steps. We return to our pews by way of the side aisles.



Once we have all received the sacrament and returned to our seats, we celebrate the personal encounter with the risen Christ through blessing, prayer, and singing.

Post-Communion Blessing

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

C Amen

Post-Communion Prayer

P Let us pray. Most High God,

C you have come among us at this table.

By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest. Amen

We are dismissed from worship knowing that our service does not end. Rather, having been in the presence of the risen Lord, we leave so that our service may truly begin.

Blessing

P May God, who gathers us in love,
lead you in pathways of righteousness and justice.
May God, who knows us more deeply than we know ourselves,
lead you in pathways of forgiveness and freedom.
May God, who fills us with good things,
lead you in pathways of equity and abundance.
The blessing of Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit
be upon you and remain with you forever.

C Amen

Hymn 248

People, Look East

Dismissal

P Go in peace loving the coming Lord and loving your neighbor.
C Thanks be to God.



Ministers and Staff

Ministers: Congregation of St. Mark's Lutheran Church
Secretary / Financial Administrator: Kathy Bryant
Organist / Choir Director: Jacob Gordon
Pastor: James Armentrout

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