

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent*  
*December 15, 2024*



*Lord of Love Lutheran Church (ELCA)*  
*10405 Fort St., Omaha, NE 68134*

*“Celebrating and sharing God’s Love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others”*

*Worship 9:00 a.m.*

*Bold type indicates Congregational responses.*

***Introduction***

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. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

***Prelude***

***Announcements***

***Ringling of the Bell***

**\*Greeting**

P: 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.**

**\*Confession and Forgiveness**

P: In this season of looking for light, let us go before God and confess how our words and actions contribute to the darkness instead of adding to the light.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of Love and Light,

**We confess that we are not always the light-bearers you desire us to be.**

**We shine a spotlight on the transgressions of others**

**while trying to keep our own sins hidden in the dark.**

**We burn bridges by being impatient, opinionated and judgmental.**

**We inflame others by lashing out in anger.**

**We go through our days enveloped in the gloom of fear and doubt.**

**We let our witness become a smoldering ember**

**until it dies out completely.**

**Forgive us Jesus, the Everlasting Light.**

**Come to us, abide with us, our Lord, Emmanuel.**

**Teach us to walk as children of light,**

**surrounded by your love, forgiveness and healing.**

**We ask this in the name of Christ.**

**Amen.**

God is light, and in God there is no darkness as all. If we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

**Amen.**

## \*Kyrie



Lord, have mer - cy\_\_ on your peo - ple. Christ have mer - cy\_\_ on\_\_ us.  
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.\_\_ Chri - ste e - le - i - son.



Shine your light in\_\_ to our dark - ness. Fill\_\_ us\_\_ with your ho - ly love.  
Heal all\_\_ con - flicts be - tween na - tions. Teach us\_\_ how to\_\_ live as one.



Be our strength in times of\_\_ trou - ble. Set us free from chains that\_\_ bind.  
Show us how to love our\_\_ neigh - bor. Run to those who\_\_ cry for\_\_ help.



Breathe new\_ life in - to our\_\_ spir - its. Pu - ri - fy our\_\_ hearts and minds.  
Word made flesh who lives a - mong us; Christ our\_\_ Lord, Em - man - u - el.

## \*Advent Wreath Litany

L: We gather this day to light the third candle of our Advent journey.

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**

As the light shines and the darkness cannot overcome it, we trust in the hope of the One to come through whom we cultivate love for one another, our neighbors, and for God.

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

## \*Prayer of the Day

L: 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.*

**First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20**

L: 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.  
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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading: Philippians 4:4-7**

L: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry 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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation**



Glo - ry be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a  
Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shines on ev - 'ry - one. Hope has lift - ed



joy - ful song to the Christ, the Liv - ing Word. Glo - - -  
up our hearts. Joy has made, in us, a home.



- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glor -



- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

**\*Gospel: Luke 3:7-18**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

John 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? Bear 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. Even 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."

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 thong 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.**

*Children’s Sermon* ..... Rev. Becky Sells

*Sermon* ..... Rev. Becky Sells

*Hymn of the Day: “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”* ..... ELW 249

***\*The Apostles’ Creed***

L: Let us declare our faith using the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again 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***

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

*A brief silence.*

God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick. We especially pray for those on our prayer list and the names of those we lift up to you in our hearts now... Show your compassion and remember your people in love. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

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

**Amen.**

**\*Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

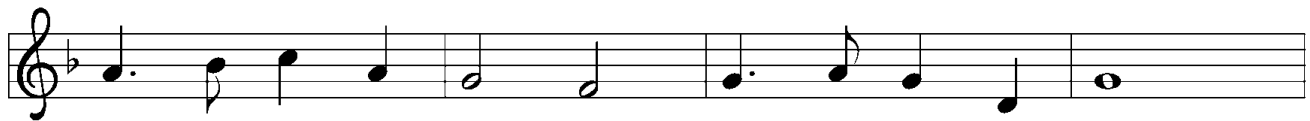
*Please share signs of peace with one another.*

*Please be seated.*

**Offering**

*Gifts may be placed in the offering plate located in the back of the sanctuary or given electronically at [www.lord-of-love.org](http://www.lord-of-love.org). Children may come forward to put their offering in the noise jar during this song.*

*Communion servers, please come forward during the offertory song.*



What . . . can I give him, poor . . . . as I am?



If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;



if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;



yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

**\*Offertory Prayer**

P: Let us pray.

**God of Light, our world is a very dark place. Therefore, we offer the gifts of ourselves, our time and our resources, trusting you will use them to set the world aglow with your loving presence. May our offerings continue to shine brightly before others so they may see our good works and give glory to you. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.**



## ***\*The Great Thanksgiving***

P: The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

At the beginning of creation God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. In ancient times God also led the Israelites through the desert with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The priests of old also kept a perpetual fire burning in the Temple to remind us that God is a light who cannot be extinguished.

Finally Jesus, the Word, who was with God since the beginning of creation, became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory shining in our world, full of grace and truth. Christ's light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. This same light has commanded us not to hide our light under a bushel basket, but to put it on a lamp stand so that everyone can see it. With our lights burning brightly, we now join the saints and angels in a hymn of praise to God, the Everlasting Light:

## ***\*Holy, Holy, Holy***



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly One... God of pow - er, God of might. Heav'n and



earth are full of your glor - y. Ho - sa - na in the high - est. Blessed! Blessed



is the one who comes... Blessed! Blessed! in... the name of God.\_\_\_\_\_

### ***\*Words of Institution***

P: 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.

### ***\*The Lord's Prayer***

P: Let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

### ***Communion Invitation***

P: God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

### ***Lamb of God***



O Lamb of God you take a-way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give\_ us your  
peace. Pre -pare us to re - ceive\_ your grace and teach us how to fol - low your ways. Re-  
joice! Re- joice! E - man - u - el has come to you, O Is - ra-el.

### ***Communion***

**\*Post-Communion Prayer**

P: Jesus, our bright Morning Star, we give you thanks that you have fed us well through the bread and wine of your Supper. May it enable us to shine brightly in all the dark places of our world with your love, justice and peace. We ask this in your holy name.

**Amen.**

**\*Benediction**

P: God of endings and beginnings,  
God in the darkness and the light,  
God, our joy for the journey,  
‡ bless and keep you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*Sending Song: "Rejoice, Rejoice Believers"..... ELW 244**

**\*Dismissal**

L: Go in joy. Christ is near.  
**Thanks be to God!**

***Ringing of the Bell***

***Postlude***

**Everlasting Light Liturgy**

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