

As We Gather

Some Advent wreaths have a pink candle for this Third Sunday in Advent. The festive, joyful pink candle reflects today's Readings, which begin to anticipate the unbridled joy that Jesus' birth brings. We do many joyful things during Advent. We sing Christmas carols, bake cookies, decorate our homes inside and out, and travel far and wide to visit those we love. Yet all these joyful things point to an even greater joy—the joy that comes by the Creator of the universe, the Lord almighty, who loves you, forgives you in Jesus, and cares about you beyond human measure! “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!”

PREPARATION

Hymn “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding” LSB 345

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Zephaniah 3:14a, 15b; 16b–17, 20

- P** Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart.
C **The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil.**
- P** “Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak.
C **The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save;**
- P** He will rejoice over you with gladness; He will quiet you by His love;
C **He will exult over you with loud singing.**
- P** I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; 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.
C **We worship You, O Lord!**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Three Advent candles are lit.

- P** Let us pray.

O Lord, let the lighting of these candles signify that You are the light that shines in all the darkness of our lives. As we wait, watch, hope, and pray, guide us all to reflect Your light and let it shine; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

- C** Amen.

Confession and Absolution

Psalms 25:6–7

- P** Having emerged from the waters of Baptism as God's new creation in Christ, we confess our sins to God and one another.

A time of silence is observed.

- P** We confess to You, O Lord, that we are captive to sin in thought, word, and deed. We have wandered from You. Our wonderings have at times turned into doubts that drew us away from You.
C **Remember Your mercy, O LORD, and Your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.**
- P** Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
C **according to Your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of Your goodness, O LORD!**

HYMN “Kyrie for the Four Sundays in Advent” v.3

**3 Forgive us, Lord, for times when joy was lost,
And moments when we never thought to laugh,
For times when we obsess and despair
And all forget Your steadfast love and care.
Forgive, forgive, forgive us all our sins
And help us live in joy that never ends.**

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P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

WORD

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ,

C we implore You to hear our prayers

P and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation;

C for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Message

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:6–8

⁶A voice says, "Cry!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All flesh is grass,

and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades

when the breath of the LORD blows on it;

surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades,

but the word of our God will stand forever.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

Philippians 4:4–7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious 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 This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse

Matthew 11:10b

P Alleluia! Alleluia!

C Alleluia! Alleluia!

P Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,

C who will prepare Your way before You.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Holy Gospel

Luke 7:18–28

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ²⁰And when the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’” ²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

²⁴When John’s messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.”

²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles’ Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

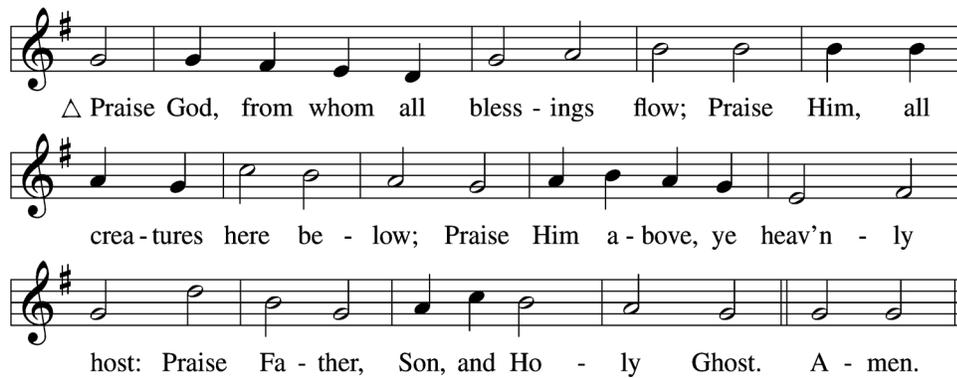
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.

Hymn “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” LSB 357 vv. 1, 3-5, 7

Sermon

Offering

Offertory "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" LSB 805



△ Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all
crea - tures here be - low; Praise Him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly
host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Prayer of the Church

P As we prepare our hearts and minds for Christ's coming, we turn to the Lord in prayer.

A brief time of silence may be observed.

P O Wisdom from on high, lead us by Your Spirit to rejoice in all that You have done to demonstrate Your love for us. Move the leaders, pastors, teachers, and all the people of our Synod to rejoice in the Lord always. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Desire of nations, bless the leaders of nations, our president and Congress, our governors and local leaders. Move all leaders to cease envy and boastfulness, injustice and corruption. Guide our leaders to be honorable people who do not neglect the poor and who strive toward the flourishing of all human beings. Bless those who serve in our armed forces and lift up refugees and all victims of war. Bring peace between us and our enemies and let Your peace reign over this broken world. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Dayspring from on high, come to the aid of all who are in need. As You humbly entered this world as a vulnerable baby, help all of us humbly to enter the lives of those who are sick, facing surgery, or dying, to offer comfort and hope, [*especially . . .*]. Bring healing according to Your will and peace to those whose suffering endures. Thank You for the work of doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals who work toward healing and restoration of wholeness. Guide scientists searching for cures for diseases that bring suffering to the world that their work might lead to healing for many. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Key of David, let Your joy, forgiveness, and peace flow freely in and among the families of this congregation. Empower parents and grandparents to love their children and children to love their parents. Watch over all who travel and comfort families who are separated by many miles. Guide families to be places where Your love is demonstrated to strangers as well as to friends. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Lord of might, help us to see in the miracles of Jesus a sign pointing forward to that Day when He will come again in great glory to restore all creation. Help us to be instruments by which our wandering world may come to see Jesus as the one who alone brings true joy into our lives. We pray,

C **Hear us, coming Lord.**

P O Immanuel, You deliver Your people even from the grip of death. Comfort those who mourn and use us to express the hope that comes from trusting in You. Bring us to be with them on that great day to come, and until that day give us grace to endure life's difficulties, while also abiding in Your love. We pray,

C **hear us, coming Lord.**

P You, O Lord, know the thoughts of our hearts and hear those prayers that come to You in sighs too deep for words. All our prayer we entrust to You in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

SACRAMENT

Preface

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

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

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Thank You, Lord of all creation, for bringing joy into this heartbroken world.

For the joy of creation, the beauty that points us to You as the Creator of all,

C **we thank You, Lord.**

P For the joy of Your promise to Adam and Eve to send a Savior,

C **we thank You, Lord.**

P For the joy of saving Noah and his family in the flood, and likewise saving us through the flood of Holy Baptism,

C **we thank You, Lord.**

P For the joy of Your covenant with Abraham and Sarah to bless the world through their offspring,

C **we thank You, Lord.**

P For the joy of Your saving the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and guiding them through the wilderness,

C **we thank You, Lord.**

P For the joy of Your sending prophets to people who had again rebelled against You,

C **we thank You, Lord.**

P For the joy of Jesus, Your Son, who proclaimed, taught, and demonstrated the coming Kingdom, and who suffered, died, rose, and ascended,

C **we thank You, Lord.**

P For the joy we receive in the body and blood of Christ,

C **we thank You. We praise You. We adore You. Amen.**

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ∇ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ∇ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Proclamation of Christ

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

Lord's Prayer

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.

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C Amen.

Distribution Hymns

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"	LSB 338
"Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing"	LSB 737
"Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring"	LSB 353

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

P Let us pray.

We rejoice, O Lord, and thank You that in Christ's body and blood we now receive forgiveness of our sins, life rooted in Christ, and salvation both now and forever; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

Philippians 4:5–7; Numbers 6:24–26

P The Lord is at hand; 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 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.

C Amen.

Hymn "Once He Came in Blessing" LSB 333

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