

The Third Sunday in Advent

December 11, 2016



MY HEART REJOICES IN THE LORD.

JOY

-1 SAMUEL 2:1

HOLY CROSS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

322 East Avenue, Kitchener, ON N2H 1Z5

519-742-5812

www.holycrosskitchener.org

The Third Sunday in Advent

8:30 & 11:00 am - Divine Services

9:45 am - Sunday School and Bible Classes for All Ages

2:00 pm - Reflections on Christmas Concert

3:30 p.m. - Slovak Congregation Service

5:30 p.m. - Griefshare Dinner & Seminar

Call To Worship Bells

Words of Welcome

Hymn

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates *LSB #341*

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!

Behold, the King of glory waits.

The King of kings is drawing near;

The Savior of the world is here.

Life and salvation He doth bring;

Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.

To God the Father raise

Your joyful songs of praise.

A righteous Helper comes to thee;

His chariot is humility,

His kingly crown is holiness,

His scepter, pity in distress.

The end of all our woe He brings;

Therefore the earth is glad and sings.

To Christ the Savior raise

Your grateful hymns of praise.

Fling wide the portals of your heart;

Make it a temple set apart

From earthly use for heav'n's employ,

Adorned with prayer and love and joy.

So shall your Sov'reign enter in

And new and nobler life begin.

To God alone be praise

For word and deed and grace!

Redeemer, come and open wide

My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!

O enter with Thy grace divine;

Thy face of mercy on me shine.

Thy Holy Spirit guide us on

Until our glorious goal is won.

Eternal praise and fame

We offer to Thy name.

Invocation & Opening Sentences

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

People **Amen.**

Pastor The Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous.

People **They will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God.**

Pastor They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads.

People **Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.**

Pastor Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts:

People **"Be strong, do not fear; your God will come."**

Kyrie

Pastor In peace let us pray to the Lord.



People Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

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



People Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Pastor 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.



People Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Pastor For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.



People Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Pastor Help, save, comfort and defend us, gracious Lord.



People Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Saluation and Collect of the Day

Pastor The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Pastor Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Pastor This is the Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle Reading: James 5:7-11

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Pastor This is the Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem (11:00 a.m. - Mike & Michelle Tracz, Ashley Carter-Black, Peter Black)**“Advent Promise”** by Pamela Martin**Holy Gospel: St. Matthew 11:2-15***Pastor* The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.*People* **Glory to You, O Lord.**

²Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

⁷As they went away, 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? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written,

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

¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Pastor This is the Gospel of the Lord.*People* **Praise to You, O Christ.****Hymn of the Day****Let All Moral Flesh Keep Silence** LSB #621

**Let all mortal flesh keep silence
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,
For with blessing in His hand
Christ our God to earth descending
Comes our homage to demand.**

**Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way
As the Light of Light, descending
From the realms of endless day,
Comes the pow’rs of hell to vanquish
As the darkness clears away.**

**At His feet the six-winged seraph,
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence
As with ceaseless voice they cry:
“Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, Lord Most High!”**

Sermon

"GREAT EXPECTATIONS"

St. Matthew 11:2-11

Apostles' Creed

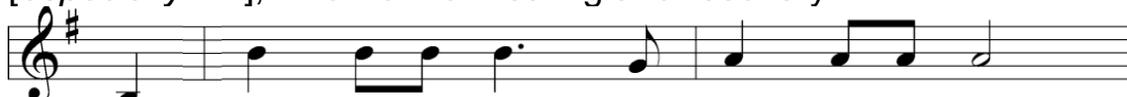
All I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from 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.

Parish Announcements and Gathering of our Offering

Prayer of the Church

Pastor Let us now pray for the Church of God and for all people according to their needs. Ever-present and comforting Lord, we pray for all those who have doubts and fears, suffering and sadness, grief and sorrow. As you affirmed John the Baptist and others that You are the true God to come to His people, we now also lift up in prayer all who wait in their time of need. We pray for the sick, [especially . . .], who wait for healing and recovery.

People


O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer;



When I call an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, O



Lord, hear my prayer; Come and lis-ten to me.

Pastor

We pray for all who experience transitions in jobs, relationships, and are in the middle of conflict or change, who wait for peace and security. Grant Your steadfast presence in times of change. We pray for nations and people waiting for peace, Come, Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, and bring justice to all.

People


O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer;



When I call an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, O



Lord, hear my prayer; Come and lis-ten to me.

Pastor We pray for those who sit in darkness, waiting to hear the Good News of forgiveness, hope, and life through Your Word, Come to them in Your Word, and use us as witnesses and instruments through Your Spirit. (*Additional petitions may be inserted here.*) Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People



O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer;
 When I call an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, O
 Lord, hear my prayer; Come and lis-ten to me.

Lord's Prayer

All 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.

Hymn Come, Though Precious Ransom, Come *LSB # 349*

Come, Thou precious Ransom, come, only hope for sinful mortals!
 Come, O Savior of the world! Open are to Thee all portals.
 Come, Thy beauty let us see; Anxiously we wait for Thee.

Enter now my waiting heart, Glorious King and Lord most holy.
 Dwell in me and ne'er depart, though I am but poor and lowly.
 Ah, what riches will be mine when Thou art my guest divine!

My hosannas and my palms graciously receive, I pray Thee;
 Evermore, as best I can, Saviour, I will homage pay Thee,
 And in faith I will embrace, Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.

Hail! Hosanna, David's Son! Jesus, hear our supplication!
 Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown, bring us blessing and salvation,
 That forever we may sing: Hail! Hosanna to our King.

Officiant..... Pastor Nolan Astley
PreacherPastor Roland Syens
OrganistsAnne Forler (8:30), Jennifer Massicotte (11:00)
Vocal Group (11:00)..... Mike & Michelle Tracz, Ashley Carter-Black, Peter Black
AcolytesGrace & Noah Radunsky (8:30), Samuel Schafer & Cole Tiegs (11:00)
Sound System Operators..... Ken Griffin (8:30), Mike Koch (11:00)

Prayer Concerns: In our prayers this week we *rejoice with Debbie Hutfloetz* who ten years ago today suffered a brain aneurism and received life-saving surgery two days later. We join her and her family in thanksgiving to God for the healing He has provided! We also continue to uphold *Paul VanderGriendt* as he continues rehabilitation in Toronto after being struck by a vehicle in March of this year. We ask God's blessing on our Christmas celebrations and our outreach into our community with the good news of the Saviour's birth

Children's Activity Bulletins...Ask an usher for a special Advent bulletin to help your kids prepare for Christmas in an activity based way.

Reflections of Christmas: Concert & Carol Sing! Join us this afternoon for a time of music, carols, readings, and stories to celebrate this wonderful time of year. A freewill offering will go to support the church organ fund as well as the musicians. A time of fellowship with refreshments will follow the program. Everyone is welcome!



Today's Education Hour

Sunday School Opening & Practise is in the *Sanctuary* today! Thanks to Pastor Syens & the Adult Bible class for moving downstairs so we can get prepared for our special opportunity to spread the GOOD NEWS!

Time Together is in recess until January 8. Praising God for a great 1st season – thanks to Beth, Michelle, Ashley, Krysti and the Families!

YABS this Sunday will be led by guest speaker Bud Brown who will give a presentation about "Communication and Personal Ministry".

Adult Bible Class, led by Pastor Syens continues the study on the book of 1 Peter. Please note this week you will meet in the church basement as the Sunday School children will be using the sanctuary.

Coming Events...

Final Saturday Children's Christmas Service Practises will be held **December 17** from **9:30 – 11:30 a.m.** "Extra choir" stay tuned for what time we'd like you to join us.

Our Children's Christmas Worship Service: Sunday School children will once again have the opportunity to lead a special worship service on **Sunday, December 18, 10 a.m.** A Congregation Fellowship time will follow the service in the Parish Hall Gym.

Help Needed! The Board of Fellowship would appreciate help on **Saturday, December 17** from **9:30 - 11:30 a.m.** during the Sunday School Christmas Service rehearsal with sandwich making in the kitchen. Any parents able to stay during this time, your help will be greatly appreciated. Any questions contact Patti Koch 519-741-5032.

Calling all Bakers it's that time of year again where we ask if you can share some of your treats for the luncheon after the Children's Christmas Service on **Sunday, December 18.** The fellowship committee would appreciate **nut-free** cookies, squares, or Christmas cake to serve with the sandwiches, veggies & dip, cheese, tea & coffee. We hope to see everyone in the gym for some fellowship and a bite to eat.

Longest Night Service... Christmas can be a difficult time for those who are experiencing loss in their lives, especially the loss of a loved one. Come join us at Holy Cross Lutheran Church for a special service of God's hope and comfort, **Monday, December 19 at 7:00 p.m.** Refreshments to follow.

Volunteers needed at St. John's Kitchen! What a wonderful opportunity to serve a meal to the homeless and working poor in our community. This year, on **Wednesday, December 28,** we have the privilege of providing a meal to those who may not have one. Won't you join us this year, and bless others through this ministry. Sign-up sheet at the Welcome Centre. Please only sign in the spaces that are allotted. Any questions please contact Anita Syens at 519-896-7574.

Friday evening Bible Study is in recess for the rest of December! It will resume in the new year on Friday, January 6.

Please Note

Advent Food Hamper collection will run during Advent thru to **Sunday, December 18.** Collection boxes have been placed at the parking lot entrance and the Stirling Avenue entrance. All donations received this year will support the Community Cupboard at Historic St. Paul's Church. Cereal and peanut butter are especially needed as those items are handed out each week. Your generous support of this food collection is very much appreciated.

2017 Contribution Envelopes are in your pigeonholes today! Pick them up and use them in the New Year. For those who did not receive an envelope packet and wish to have one, contact the church office (742-5812), or email to: debbie@holycrosskitchener.org.

Organ Fund Update: At the November 28 Voters meeting unanimous approval was given to proceed with the installation of the new-to-us Casavant Pipe Organ here at Holy Cross. However, before we sign the contract we need to raise another \$27,000. As you consider year-end giving options please give prayerful thought to a special gift to the organ fund. It is our hope to have the organ installed in plenty of time for the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation in the fall of 2017.

Advent Devotional Booklets are available at the Welcome Centre. Why not sit around the supper table, read a bit and meditate on God's Word, of the Advent and coming Christmas season? These can be rich moments for all families.

Pick up a Christmas Invitation and Invite a Friend! Share the joy of Christmas with a friend at one of our Christmas services! Pick up invitations from our Welcome Centre.

Our Clothing & Mitten Tree is set up in the narthex and is in need of **new socks & underwear** as well as the **new mittens, gloves, hats and scarves**. Your gifts are then forwarded to grateful folks who need them both locally and in communities far away. Clothing / Decoration will be accepted until December 21.

Christmas Poinsettias: Just a reminder that last year our members helped to purchase artificial poinsettias to decorate the church at Christmas. So there will be no need for us to have a sign up for them this year. We encourage our members who did sign up in past years to donate to your favourite mission this Christmas instead.

Canadian Lutheran World Relief's Gifts from the Heart provide you with meaningful and tangible gifts that will share God's love with the world. No matter which gift you choose, the gifts you give are saving and changing lives. Discover this year's gifts at www.clwr.org/gfth.

Last Week at Holy Cross...

Sunday Attendance:	109 & 210	Total 319	('15 – 317)
Sunday Communion Attd:	92 & 169	Total 261	('15 – 258)
Sunday School:	Pupils: 43 Staff: 14	Total 57	('15 – 53)
Adult Bible Class:	Pupils: 46 Staff: 1	Total 47	('15 – 39)
Youth Bible Class:	Pupils: 12 Staff: 1	Total 13	('15 – 8)
YABS:	Pupils: 5 Staff: 1	Total 6	('15 – 6)

Thankofferings: In honour of choir leaders **JENNIFER MASSICOTTE** and **HEATHER SCHEIN** to the Organ Fund from Bruce & Norene Brubacher, Joyce Kehn, Marjorie Snyder.

Memorials: In memory of **BOB PETERS** to the Organ Fund from Pastor Lloyd & Shirley Wentzlaff, Bruno & Jean Fergin. In memory of **JANET CRESS** to the Unified Church Budget from Bernie & Helga Drung. In memory of **REINHOLD GERLACH** to the Organ Fund from Gladys Musselman. In memory of **ROSS MARTIN** to the Organ Fund from Shirley Martin. In memory of **DON FIELDING** to the Organ Fund from Norine Fielding. In memory of **NANCY KOCH** to the Organ Fund from Verica Ketko. In memory of **VALERIE BAKER** to the Unified Church Budget from Dr. Robert MacKenzie. In memory of **ROGER SCHMITT** to the Sunday School from Bob & Jean Schmitt.

Weekly Calendar

Monday December 12 to Sunday December 18, 2016

Monday	ESL English Conversation, <i>Historic St. Paul's</i>	10:30 a.m.
Tuesday	ESL, <i>Historic St. Pauls</i>	6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	Board of Elders, <i>Confirmation Classroom</i>	7:30 p.m.
	Ladies Ensemble Rehearsal, <i>Mezzanine</i>	8:30 p.m.
Thursday	Beginnings, <i>Downstairs</i>	9:30 a.m.
	Prayer Group, <i>Triple Bible Classroom</i>	9:30 a.m.
	Praise Singers, <i>Church</i>	7:00 p.m.
	Church Choir, <i>Church</i>	8:00 p.m.
Friday	Youth Circuit Event, <i>1st St. Paul's Lutheran Church Wellesley</i>	7:00 p.m.
Saturday	Sunday School Service Practice, <i>Church, Basement, Gym</i>	9:30 a.m.
Sunday	The Fourth Sunday in Advent	
	Holy Communion Service , <i>Church</i>	8:30 a.m.
	Children's Christmas Worship Service , <i>Church</i>	10:00 a.m.
	Congregational Fellowship, <i>Gym</i>	11:15 p.m.

"By God's grace, the members of Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church will be a caring, vibrant diverse community of blessed believers, lovingly reaching out with the message of Jesus Christ." - *Vision Statement 2010*

You're Invited To The Following Advent/Christmas Services

Advent

Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church

322 East Avenue, Kitchener
Ontario N2H 1Z5
(519) 742-5812
www.holycrosskitchener.org

*The true light, which enlightens
everyone, was coming into the
world. John 1:9*

Reflections of Christmas: Christmas Concert & Carol Sing

Sunday, December 11, 2016
2:00 p.m.

(fellowship & refreshments to follow)

Sunday School Children's Worship Service

Sunday, December 18, 2016
10:00 a.m.

(congregation fellowship to follow ~ all are welcome)

Longest Night Service

Monday, December 19, 2016
7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Saturday, December 24, 2016
4:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Holy Communion Service

Sunday, December 25, 2016
10:00 a.m.

New Year's Eve Holy Communion Service

Saturday, December 31, 2016
7:00 p.m.

New Year's Day Holy Communion Service

Sunday, January 1, 2017
10:00 a.m.