

Advent 3: December 13, 2020

Gathering

Prelude: "People, Look East"

Opening Hymn: "Prepare the Royal Highway"

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| 1 Prepare the royal highway;
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story: | 3 Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing: <i>Refrain</i> |
|---|---|

Refrain

Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

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| 2 God's people, see him coming:
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! <i>Refrain</i> | 4 His is no earthly kingdom;
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding: <i>Refrain</i> |
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Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

C: **Amen.**

P: Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Loving and forgiving God,

C: **we confess that we are held captive by sin.
In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.
We have not welcomed the stranger;
we have not loved our neighbor;
we have not been Christ to one another.**

Restore us, O God.

Wake us up and turn us from our sin.

Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

P: People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, ✝ comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Word

Blessing of the Lector

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, your Word became flesh and dwelled among us. Bless Linda, who will now read to us the Scriptures, that your Word may dwell in our hearts and wake us to your coming in Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

¹The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to 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 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁸ For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalmody: Psalm 126

- ¹ **When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.**
- ² **Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."**
- ³ **The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.**
- ⁴ **Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.**
- ⁵ **Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.**
- ⁶ **Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²² abstain from every form of evil. ²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Special Music: "Light an Advent Candle"

Becki Stagle Mayo

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness.

C: Bless us as we light the third candle of this wreath.

P: Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord. May he give water to all who thirst, for he is our light and our salvation.

C: Blessed be God forever. Amen.

The Holy Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1st chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

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

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

'Make straight the way of the Lord,'"

as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Silence for reflection and meditation

Hymn of the Day: "On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry" (v. 1-2, 5)

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| 1 On Jordan's banks the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings! | 2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there. |
| 5 All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Spirit, evermore. | |

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.**

The Prayers of Intercession

After each petition:

A: Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

The Peace

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

C: And also with you.

Offering Prayer

Please stand as you are able.

A: God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, Emmanuel, God with us.

C: **Amen.**

The Meal

The Great Thanksgiving

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 our thanks and praise.**

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

**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.**

Invitation to Communion

P: The Lord has clothed you with salvation and righteousness. Eat and drink in joy.

The Body of Christ, broken for you.

The Blood of Christ, shed for you.

All eat bread and drink wine or juice at their seat.

Special Music for Reflection

Flute Trio: "Now Let All the World Be Silent"

Jay Althouse

Nick Huitger, alto flute

Nancy Erbeck, flute

Kris Keith, flute

Table Blessing

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

C: Amen.

Prayer after Communion

A: God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of the day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Sending

Blessing

P: The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ✚ now and forever.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending” (v. 1 & 4)

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| 1 | Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
once for favored sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign. | 4 | Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the pow’r and glory,
claim the kingdom as thine own.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone! |
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Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude: “Hark, the Glad Sound!”

Worship Leaders

The Rev. Emily Beckering, Pastor

Kris Keith, Music Director

Kate Wollenburg, Organist

Terry McDowell, Assisting Minister

Linda Miller, Reader

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Thank you for worshiping with us today.

To give your offering through our website, please visit stpaulreading.org/online-giving/

Our Life Together

For emergency pastoral care, please call the after-hours line at 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, call Penny Huber, 513-931-6420. To remove people from the list, contact the office.

We pray for **Mary and her granddaughter Kyra** (friend of Paul Pieper); **Berkeley** (Carol Curless's great-grandson); **Pr. Lisa Bernheisel**; **Louise Barry**; **Teresa Bell** (former member); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Bobby** (Christian Lohmeier's friend); **Nancy Bose** (Kathy Hirt's friend); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Nicole Bucknam** (friend of Millers); **Jodie Calhoun**; **Christian**; **Frances Clemons** (Portmanns' friend); **Kathy Curless**; **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Dick** (Linda Miller's brother); **Jeremy Doan** (Jean Winkle's grandson); **Jerry Doan** (Jean Winkle's son-in-law); **Lee Erbeck**; **Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Micki Ford** (Fords' niece); **Jeanne Fuller**; **Scarlett Gally** (Beth Wernery's great-niece); **Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **George and Sherry** (Shirley Harbaugh's cousins); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Steve Gollehon** (Elinor Schieman's cousin); **Hannah**; **Matthew Harrison** (Seals' neighbor); **Sandy Hatcher** (Linda Holt's sister); **Elain Heskamp**; **Richard Hoffman** (Cindy Mayhugh's brother); **Andrew Horton**; **Mary Ann Hudecki** (Linda Miller's sister), **Ellen Hunter** (Jeni Cathcart's grandmother); **Jo and her daughter** (Jeanne Fuller's friends); **Joan** (Penny Huber's friend); **Kate** (granddaughter of Dennis King's friend); **Dennis King**; **Jay King** (son of Jamie King); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Lewis Laine** (Chet Laine's brother); **Richard Lane** (Elinor Schieman's nephew); **Nelson Langefeld**; **Yvonne Lowery** (St. Paul Players); **Revea and Jim Mayhew** (Millers' sister & brother-in-law); **Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Ann Miller** (Millers' niece); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Doris Minton**; **Barbara Moorhouse**; **Jean Nolte**; **Ervin Oerther** (Portmanns' brother-in-law); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Richard Osborn** (Betty Pack's brother); **Rosie Osborn** (Betty Pack's sister); **Eric Papin**; **Christian & Suzie Pereira** (Carolyn Koehl's granddaughter & grandson-in-law); **Richard Peterson** (Shirley Harbaugh's brothers); **Don Pflieger** (Kings' brother-in-law); **Ginny Pape**; **Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Paul Pieper**; **Faith Pirrmann**; **Pat Popplewell** (Dennis King's friend); **James Savoy** (Jean Winkle's great-grandson); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Sheila Schultz** (Betty Pack's friend); **Brenda Schumacher** (Marilyn Portmann's friend); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **Shear family** (Kings' daughter & son-in-law); **Kate Sheridan** (Kings' family friend); **Keith Shupe** (father of Kelly Shupe); **Jason Simpson** (Freda Faulkner's grand-nephew); **Patricia Smith**

(Teresa Bell's mother); **Scott Songer; Judy Songer** (friends of Jean Winkle); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Frank Sturgill** (Jim's dad); **Britney Jean Teems** (Jean Winkle's granddaughter); **Teresa** (friend of Marty Lohmeier); **Randy Thaman** (friend of Marie Calhoun); **Geri Toland** (Carole Replogle's neighbor); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Tereasa Vogel** (Freda Faulkner's friend); **Jack Wagner; Jeanne Wagner; Daryl Wesselman** (Betty Pack's granddaughter); **Jean Winkle; Susan Winkle** (Jean Winkle's daughter-in-law); **Mike and Lou Zecchini** (Minton/Betsch in-laws).

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week: **Louise Barry, Barbara Moorhouse, Jean Nolte, Heather Segar.**

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords' neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman's grandson); **Victoria Derry** (Elinor Schieman's great-granddaughter); **Jared Forst** (Jim and Loretta's grandson); **Beau Glenn** (Karen Koehl's son-in-law); **Kylie Hahn** (Gretta Hahn's granddaughter); **Donald Hosea** (Karen Koehl's son); **Samuel McLoughlin** (friend of Cindy Sieckman); **Scott Minton** (Doris Minton's son); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey; Mack Thompson** (Freda Faulkner's grandson); **Alex Wisecup** (son of Nardine and Barry Wisecup).

Upcoming Events

Sunday, December 13: 3rd Sunday of Advent

10:30 am Worship (in-person and
livestreamed)

4 pm Zoom Sunday School

Monday, December 14

7 pm Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 15

4 pm Bible Study on Zoom

Virtual Children's Choir Submission Deadline

Wednesday, December 16

6:30 pm Bell Choir

Wednesday, December 18

Virtual Pageant Submission Deadline

Sunday, December 20: 4th Sunday of Advent

10:30 am Worship (in-person and
livestreamed)

4 pm Zoom Fellowship Time

Monday, December 21

Epistle Articles Deadline

7 pm Christmas Eve quartet rehearsal

Tuesday, December 22

4 pm Bible Study on Zoom

Thursday, December 24

6:45 pm Special Music

7 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service