



Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Greenville

*Third Sunday of Advent
December 12 and 13, 2020*

Welcome in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ! If you come as a visitor today, we hope you will leave as a friend. We count it a privilege and a blessing to have you with us in worship. If you are not presently a member of any congregation, please feel welcome to gather with us around Jesus in this community of his disciples at Holy Trinity. Come and worship with us again!

Invitation to Communion: Holy Communion is the body and blood of Jesus Christ by which our Lord is truly present to forgive sin and bring life and salvation. All baptized Christians who believe this promise are welcome to commune. Parents with children are encouraged to come to the altar together. Children who do not yet receive communion will receive the blessing of the Church from the Pastor.

Procedure for Communing: We will be using a form of processional communion. An usher will release each pew to come forward at a time to avoid a long line in the aisle. Pick up a communion cup on either side at the first pew. The pastor will place a host in your open palm. Turn to either the left or right side to the deacon or communion assistant to receive wine. After consuming the host and wine, pour any remaining wine into the container, then discard your cup. Children who have not yet received their First Holy Communion should come forward for a blessing. Please maintain social distance between non-family members.

Gluten-free wafers are available; let Pastor know when you come forward to receive.

Service of Holy Communion

Significance of the Day: John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

Gathering

Prelude

Variations on *King's Weston*

(Hughes)

Greeting and Announcements

(The assembly stands as the ministers enter.)

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving and forgiving God,
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.

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.
Amen.

Opening Hymn

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

(Please be seated. We will not be singing but these words are here for your reflection.)

Hail to the Lord's anointed,
great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
your reign on earth begun!
You come to break oppression,
to set the captive free,
to take away transgression
and rule in equity.

You shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth;
love, joy, and hope, like flowers,
spring in your path to birth.
Before you on the mountains
shall peace, the herald, go;
and righteousness in fountains
from hill to valley flow.

You come with rescue speedy
to those who suffer wrong,
to help the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying,
are precious in your sight.

Kings shall fall down before you,
and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore you,
your praise all people sing.
To you shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend;
your kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.

Apostolic Greeting

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.

Blessing of the Advent Wreath

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.
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.

Prayer of the Day

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.
Amen.

(The assembly is seated.)

A reading from Isaiah:

- 1 The 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.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 126

1 When the LORD restored the for- | tunes 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 for- | tunes, 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, carry- | ing the seed,
will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves.

A reading from 1 Thessalonians:

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.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (*The assembly stands.*)

Alleluia.

**I am sending my messenger before you,
who will prepare your way before you.**

Alleluia.

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

(The reading of the Gospel.)

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

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

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

'Make straight the way of the Lord,' "

as the prophet Isaiah said.

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

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

(The assembly sits.)

(The assembly remains seated.)

Hymn of the Day

At the Name of Jesus

(We will not be singing but these words are here for your reflection.)

At the name of Jesus
ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him
king of glory now.
It is God's good pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.

At his voice creation
sprang at once to sight,
all the angel faces,
all the hosts of light,
thrones and dominations,
stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders
in their great array.

Humbled for a season,
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last;
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed.

In your hearts enthrone him;
there let him subdue
all that is not holy,
all that is not true.
Crown him as your captain
in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you
in its light and pow'r.

Christians, this Lord Jesus
shall return again
on the clouds of glory,
with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
king of glory now.

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
we acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
we look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

A: God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need, responding, “Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.”

(Brief silence)

A: God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news. Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship. Embed your word in their hearts. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A: God of every living creature, you announce the year of your favor for all of creation. Extend your kindness and relief to endangered animals and plants. Strengthen the human beings who rely on the rhythms of nature to make their living. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A: God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through their actions. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A: God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A: God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing. We pray for those sick and isolating because of Covid-19. Give them healing, energy and perseverance. Hear us, O God.

C. **Your mercy is great.**

A: God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant love, especially Bob. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Hear us, O God.

C. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Are there others for whom we should pray?

P. Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

(The assembly sits.)

Meal

Offering

Music during the Offering Interlude on *He Came Down* (Shields)

(The assembly stands. The deacon, on behalf of the people, prays.)

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

Savior of the nations, come.

Make your home here in us.

Feed us with your love,

that our faith shines ever new

and our lives reveal your light, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also 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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,

our Salvation and our Hope,

we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.

When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,

you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.

At this end of the ages

your Son Jesus came to bring us your love

and to heal all the suffering world.

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.

For as often as we eat this bread and drink from this cup,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

Remembering, therefore,
his life, death, and resurrection,
we await his coming again
in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us
and on this bread and wine we share:
strengthen our faith,
increase our hope,
and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through Christ all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

Breaking of Bread

As the bread is broken:

They will come from East and West, and from North and South, and sit at the table in the kingdom of God. Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.

Come, Lord Jesus.

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all is now ready.

(The assembly sits.)

Communion of the Faithful

Procedure for Communing: *We will be using a form of processional communion. An usher will release each pew to come forward at a time to avoid a long line in the aisle. Pick up a communion cup on either side at the first pew. The pastor will place a host in your open palm. Turn to either the left or right side to the deacon or communion assistant to receive wine. After consuming the host and wine, pour any remaining wine into the container, then discard your cup. Children who have not yet received their First Holy Communion should come forward for a blessing. Please maintain social distance between non-family members.*

(Following the Communion the assembly stands for the blessing.)

Post-Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and preserve you unto eternal life.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait,
we give you thanks for this meal of life
that you have set before us.
May our sharing of this heavenly food,
in which you are present even now,
nourish our faith, strengthen us for service,
and deepen our hunger for the coming of your reign
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(Silence for reflection.)

Sending

Our Prayer for These Times

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

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.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Variation on *Repton*

(Biery)

Serving Tonight

Presiding Minister Pastor Brenda Martin
Pianist Maidene Hackett
Liturgical Deacon Dan Eppley

Serving Today

Presiding Minister Pastor Brenda Martin
Organist Maidene Hackett
Cantor Billie Hollenbaugh
Liturgical Deacon Sheryl Lanning
Communion Assistant Nancy McLaughlin
Lector Barbara Swartz
Head Usher Linda Armstrong
Altar Guild Alyssa Martin and family

Acknowledgments

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Pastors in residence:

The Rev. Julia Fraser, chaplain at St. Paul Homes
The Rev. Brian Riddle, Thiel College Campus Pastor
The Rev. Martin Roth, retired pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
The Rev. Dr. Curtis Thompson, retired, Thiel College