

Grow ... Go ... Gather
December 13, 2020



ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH
(LCMS)

2040 Oakwood Avenue N.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505



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The Third Sunday in Advent

A Service of Prayer and Preaching (p. 260 ff.)

Please turn off your wifi
Please wear your mask when singing

The Pre-Service Music, the Call to Worship, and Welcome

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P: God of Joy, 2020 has filled our television screens, news sites, and airwaves with scenes of devastation. In this season of Advent, open our hearts to a joy that withstands the strongest storm, and provides a foundation for hope. God of Promise, God of Joy:

C: Into our weary world, come.

P: God of Joy, we long for the double portion of everlasting joy you promise. Remind us that in Christ, joy is possible even when we are surrounded by brokenness. God of Promise, God of Joy:

C: Into our weary world, come.

P: God of Joy, today we remember our siblings in the Middle East. Be with our neighbors who are afraid or alone. Bring them comfort and hope. Be with them as they 'repair the ruined cities' and "raise up the former devastations," rooting in their hearts a joy that lifts their spirits above the challenges of the day. God of Promise, God of Joy:

C: Into our weary world, come.

P: God of Joy, thank you for bringing your light and love into the world through Jesus. Thank you for inviting us to be part of bringing your good news

into the world. Guide us to find ways to share the love and joy you give us with our neighbors here at home and in faraway places. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, the One we long for in this season of hope.

C: Amen.

(As we sing the opening hymn, we light three Advent candles, including the pink candle, which symbolizes joy.)

The Opening Hymn: LSB 338, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"



1 Come, Thou long - ex - spect-ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy peo - ple free;
2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re - lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

Text and tune: Public domain

The Advent Versicles *LSB 260*

- P** This is the day which the Lord has made;
- C** **let us rejoice and be glad in it.**
- P** From the rising of the sun to its setting,
- C** **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**

P Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.

C **Our God shall come; He does not keep silence.**

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

C **Make His paths straight.**

P Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness.

C **Let the earth open, that salvation may sprout forth.**

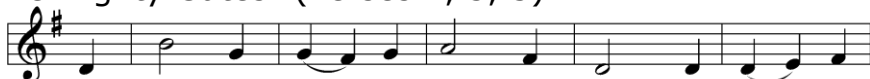
P From the rising of the sun to its setting,

C **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;**

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

A Hymn of Praise: LSB 341, "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" (verses 1, 3, 5)



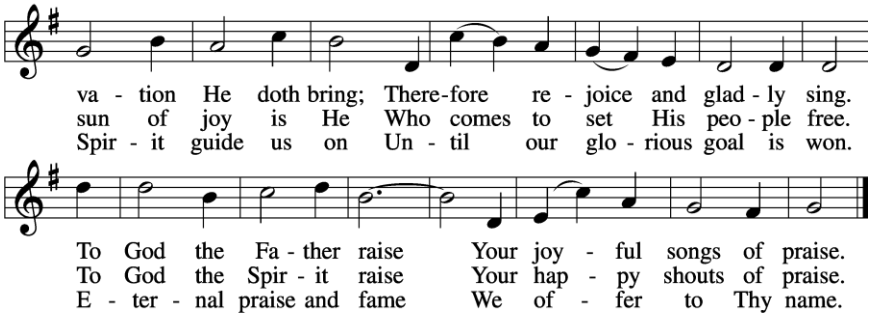
1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the
3 How blest the land, the city blest, Where Christ the
5 Redeemer, come and open wide My heart to



King of glory waits. The King of kings is drawing
ruler is confessed! O peaceful hearts and happy
Thee; here, Lord, abide! O enter with Thy grace di-



near; The Savior of the world is here. Life and sal-
homes To whom this King in triumph comes! The cloud-less
vine; Thy face of mercy on me shine. Thy Holy



va - tion He doth bring; There - fore re - jice and glad - ly sing.
 sun of joy is He Who comes to set His peo - ple free.
 Spir - it guide us on Un - til our glo - rious goal is won.

To God the Fa - ther raise Your joy - ful songs of praise.
 To God the Spir - it raise Your hap - py shouts of praise.
 E - ter - nal praise and fame We of - fer to Thy name.

Tune and text: Public domain

✠ Readings from Holy Scripture ✠

The Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

P A reading from Isaiah, the sixty-first chapter.

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
 because the LORD has anointed me
 to bring good news to the poor;
 he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim liberty to the captives,
 and the opening of the prison to those who are
 bound;
 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
 and the day of vengeance of our God;
 to comfort all who mourn;
 to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
 to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
 the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
 the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
 that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
 the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.
 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. . .

For I the LORD love justice;
I hate robbery and wrong;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their offspring shall be known among the nations,
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge them,
that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my soul 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 like a
priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride
adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a
garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to sprout up before all the nations.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

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

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. . . .

This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 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."

(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

The Advent Responary *LSB 263*

P Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.

C **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**

- P** He shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.
- C** **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**
- P** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
- C** **This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.**

The Ten Commandments

- C** **You shall have no other gods.**
You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
Honor your father and your mother.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

The Sermon Hymn: "Here I Am to Worship/Light of the World" (Hughes)

Verse 1

Light of the world
 You stepped down into darkness
 Opened my eyes let me see
 Beauty that made
 This heart adore You
 Hope of a life spent with You

Chorus

***So here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You're my God
And You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me***

Verse 2

King of all days
Oh so highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above
Humbly You came
To the earth You created
All for love's sake became poor **(Chorus)**

Bridge

And I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross
And I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross **(Chorus)**

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The Sermon: Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11, "The Perfect Present for Christmas"

The Offering Prayer

The Prayers of the Church

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.

The Collect for the Word LSB 265

P Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The Morning Prayer LSB 266

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.

The Blessing LSB 267

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

C Amen.

The Closing Hymn: “Light of the World, Sing Hallelujah” (We The Kingdom)

Verse 1

Light of the World Treasure of Heaven
Brilliant like the stars in the wintery sky
Joy of the Father reach through the darkness
Shine across the earth send the shadows to flight

Verse 2

Light of the World from the beginning
The tragedies of time were no match for Your love
From great heights of glory You saw my story
God You entered in and became one of us

Chorus

Sing hallelujah
Sing hallelujah
Sing hallelujah for the things He has done
Come and adore Him
Bow down before Him
Sing hallelujah to the Light of the World

Verse 3

Light of the world crown in a manger
Born for the cross to suffer to save
High King of Heaven death is the poorer
We are the richer by the price that He paid

(Chorus)

Verse 4

Light of the World soon will be coming
With fire in His eyes He will ransom His own
Through clouds He will lead us straight into glory
And there He shall reign forevermore. **(Chorus)**

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Events of the Week: December 13 – 20, 2020

- TODAY:** 11:00 a.m. Bible study on Facebook Live
- Monday:** 10:00 a.m. Registration for **December 20**
Worship begins
6:30 p.m. Monday Evening Worship Service
with Holy Communion
- Tuesday:** Noon: "Ponder His Coming" Devotional on
FB
- Wed.:** 7:00 p.m. **Mid-week Advent Service**
- Thursday:** Noon: "Ponder His Coming" Devotional
on FB
6:00 p.m. Adult Bells
- Friday:** 12:00 Noon Registration closes for phone-in
Worship registration.
- Saturday** 6:00 p.m. Registration for Worship
is closed
- Sunday:** 9:30 a.m. Communion Worship at St.
James (for registered members) and on
Facebook Live
11:00 a.m. Bible Study on Facebook

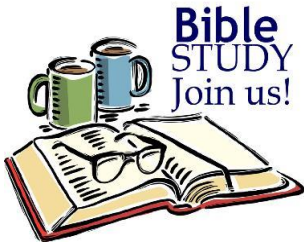
Today's Deacon: Jerry Talen

Ushers: Jim & Nancy Spears

December Altar Guild: Marjie Weiss and Melissa
Ensing

FINANCIAL DISCIPLESHIP (December 2, 2020)

General Fund	\$13,330.00
Plate Collection	975.00
Roof Repair Fund	75.00
Future Building Expansion	425.00
ISJ Academy	300.00
Tessaro Ministry Nigeria	50.00
<hr/>	
Total:	\$15,155.00



New Bible Studies will begin in the New Year: Starting in January, Pastor Schaeffer will begin two new Bible studies. Did you know that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity

appears in the Old Testament? It's true! Starting Sunday, **January 3rd** at 11:00 a.m. Pastor Schaeffer will discuss some of those Old Testament appearances. Pastor Schaeffer will also begin a six-week Bible study starting the first week of January on St. John's First Epistle. The title for this study is "*Established in Truth ... Marked by Love.*" This study will be offered twice during the week: **January 6 at 10:00 a.m.** (in person at the church and on ZOOM). And, the same study will be offered on **Thursday evenings**, beginning **January 7** at 7:30 p.m. on ZOOM. If you plan to participate in the Bible study via ZOOM, please register with Pastor Schaeffer (glenn.schaeffer@stjamesgr.com) by letting him know which ZOOM study you want to attend and he will send you the connection information. NOTE: If government regulations forbid groups of people from meeting in person, the 1 John study will only be available online.



Thank you to the many St. James families who participated in the ISJ Christmas Wreath sale.



LUTHERANS FOR LIFE QUOTE: **December 13**

"Will you be without loved ones this holiday season? Will you be struggling with illness or discouragement? Will you feel the pressure to make the holiday season great? You are not alone. You are not on your own. Read John 10, a great chapter about a Good Shepherd. Listen to His voice comfort and strengthen you."
Rev. John Boeder, Martin Luther College – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life •
www.lutheransforlife.org

To register for worship, please go to:

1. Go to bit.ly/stjamesgr
2. Click on the worship service you wish to attend.
3. Click on the green "**register**" box.
4. Put in the **number attending**.
5. Click on the orange "**register**" box.

Enter **your first name** and **ALL** the **first names** of those attending with you in the "first name" box.

First Name* Martin, Katie,
Margarete, Magdalena,
Elisabeth, Paul, Hans, Martin Jr.

Enter **only one last name, e-mail address and confirm e-mail address.**

6. Click on the orange "**register**" box.
7. Your ticket(s) will arrive in your e-mail inbox confirming your sign-up.

Last Name* Luther



REGISTRATION TO ATTEND WORSHIP SERVICES IN DECEMBER IS REQUIRED:

We are asking people who plan to attend worship services in the month of December to register everyone who plans on attending on Eventbrite.

The registration for Christmas Eve will close on Saturday, December 19.

Worship attendance is limited to 75 people per service on a first come - first serve basis.

Currently we have two services for Christmas Eve: 5:00pm and 7:00pm.

(Only the 7:00pm Christmas Eve service will be on Facebook Live)

All worship services (except Monday evening and the 5:00pm Christmas Eve service) will be broadcast live on our St. James Facebook page.

Registration is needed for Sunday worship, Advent, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve services.