

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

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

COMMUNION

Christ, our Host, bids all welcome to God's Table of Grace! Individually wrapped gluten-free wafers are available for you to pick-up from the table in front of the Baptismal Font. Grape juice is also available

COMMUNION SONG

(ELW p. 154)

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. Amen.

BLESSING

May God who comes among us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. Amen.

SENDING SONG

“HE CAME DOWN”

ELW 253

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns”
Saxophone Soloist, Eric Hillestad

From sundaysandseasons.com

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TODAY’S WORSHIP LEADERS

Deacon GeoRene (Jo) Jones
Ami-Luise Vucovich, Organ button pusher

Assisting Minister: Tracey Perez
Greeter: David & Pat Sweet
Reader: Julie Bartlett
Communion: Julie Bartlett &
Assistants: Phil Brooks
Audio/Video: Ami-Luise Vucovich / Miles Micci
Ushers: Patrick Lemons
Altar Guild: Diana Brooks
Friendship Room: Old Friendship Room with Jan Brauer &
Marilyn Schuster

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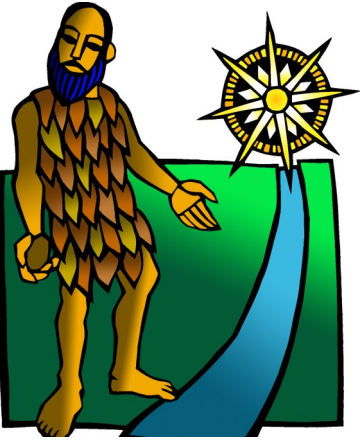
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Charlotte, NC 28209
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Third Sunday of Advent
December 14, 2025
10:00am



INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

A note of joyful expectation marks today’s worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God’s reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ’s advent among us.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” Saxophone, Eric Hillestad

CONFESSION AND FORGIVNESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Long-expected God, we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God’s timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.

Hear this assurance: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God’s own righteous-ness. You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. Amen.

GATHERING SONG

“PEOPLE LOOK EAST ”

ELW 248

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.

KYRIE

(ELW p. 147)

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

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. Lord, have mercy.

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

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

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

(ELW p. 148)

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God’s people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE - JOY CANDLE - Conner family
“LIGHT ONE CANDLE TO WATCH FOR MESSIAH” Vs 3 ELW 240

Light three candles to watch for the Messiah: let the light banish darkness. Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH - FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10 (NRSV OT p. 811)

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. 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. ³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.” ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God’s people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No 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. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10 (NRSV NT p. 281)

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 151)
Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11 (NRSV NT p. 13)
The holy gospel according to Matthew. Glory to you, O Lord.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’” ¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of

women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT” ELW 715

CREED
I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION
....God of grace, hear our prayer.

...trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. Amen.

PEACE

OFFERING
“Magnificat” Soloist, Jennifer Ferreira
OFFERTORY HYMN ELW 181

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and the dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER
Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING
DIALOGUE (ELW p. 152)
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.

PREFACE (ELW p. 153)

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 153)
Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE
...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

...Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. Amen.