

The Third Sunday of Advent
December 17, 2023

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Hymns are found in the blue *Hymnal 1982* or the red and black *Lift Every Voice and Sing II (LEVAS)* in your pew.

The 'S' numbers are located at the front of the hymnal.

The service begins in quiet and prayer.

Prelude: *Comfort, Comfort these my People* arr. Michael Burkhardt (b. 1957)

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn 76: *On Jordan's Bank*

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

People **Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Kyrie: Hymn S-96: *Lord, have mercy*

Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The First Lesson: *Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

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; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 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. 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 wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. 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. 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

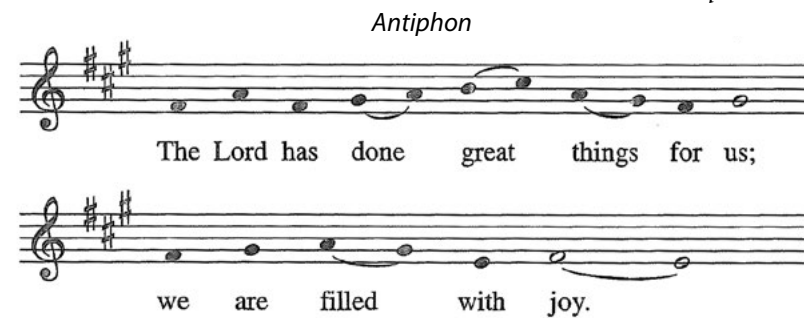
herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 126

Spoken at 8:00 am



When the Lord brought back the captives of Zion,
we were like men dreaming.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with rejoicing.

All Sing Antiphon

Then they said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”
The Lord has done great things for us;
we are glad indeed.

All Sing Antiphon

Restore our Fortunes, O Lord,
like the torrents in the southern desert.
Those who sow in tears
shall reap rejoicing.

All Sing Antiphon

Although they go forth weeping,
carrying the seed to be sown,
they shall come back rejoicing,
carrying their sheaves.

All Sing Antiphon

The Second 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 the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

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. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn 70: *Herald, sound a note of judgement*

Reader The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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

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

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for 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, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The 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: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. 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. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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.

The Prayers of the People

Please stand or kneel.

God of joy, you sent John the Baptist as a witness to testify to the light. As we await the coming of Christ, we pray to you for the needs of the church, this community, and the world. *A brief silence.* Holy God, shine your light into our hearts, that at his coming your Son Jesus Christ may find in us a dwelling place prepared for him. **God of joy, hear our prayer.**

O God, be thou a bright flame before us. Be thou a guiding star above us. Be thou a smooth path before us. Be thou a kindly shepherd behind us: this day and forever. **God of joy, hear our prayer.** *(St. Columba)*

We give thanks for our new members and ask your care for them. We pray for all visitors joining us today, that they may find their spirits nourished and uplifted by our hospitality and welcome. **God of joy, hear our prayer.**

God of love, we ask for healing for the divisions in our nation. Teach us to listen deeply to one another and learn to respect each other in spite of our differences. Fill our land with your spirit of reconciliation that we may truly be one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. **God of joy, hear our prayer.**

God of peace, may your healing Spirit descend upon the Middle East, Ukraine, and all places torn apart by violence and conflict. Comfort those who mourn and those who have been harmed by brutality. Stand with those who are fearful. Protect refugees and humanitarian relief efforts. Inspire and uphold those who work for a just and durable peace. **God of joy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are sick, including those on our prayer list and those whose suffering is known to you alone. *Pause* Surround them with your loving presence, and restore them to wholeness and health in your good time and in your good way. **God of joy, hear our prayer.**

In a moment of silence, let us pray for those who are dear to us. *Silence* Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours; grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us. **God of joy, hear our prayer.**

We lift in prayer those who have died, remembering especially Albert Wilson, who died this week; John R. Mack and Martha J. Ford, in whose memory the flowers are given this morning; and all those who are dear to each of us. *Silence* Let light perpetual shine upon them. May their souls, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **God of joy, hear our prayer.**

O God, by whose mercy and might the world turns safely into darkness and returns again into light: we give into your hands our unfinished tasks, our unresolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes, knowing that only that which you bless will prosper. To your great love and protection we commit each other and all your people, knowing you alone are our sure defender, through Jesus Christ. **Amen.** *(South India prayer)*

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor. *Silence* **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Celebrant Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

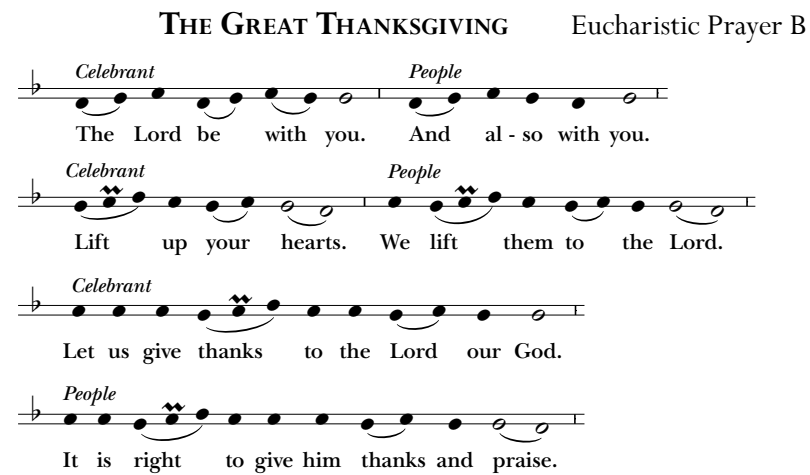
People **And also with you.**

Offertory Anthem: *There is No Rose* Ronald Center
The St. Andrew's Adult Choir Women's Chorus

There is no rose of such vertu as is the rose that bare Jesu; Alleluia. For in this rose contained was Heaven and earth in litel space; Res miranda. By that rose may well see there be one God in persons three, Pares forma. The angels sangen the shepherds to: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gaudeamus. Leave we all this worldly mirth and follow we this joyful birth; transeamus. Alleluia, Res miranda, Pares forma, Gaudeamus, Transeamus.

Children's Entrance Hymn 69: *What is the crying at Jordan?*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING Eucharistic Prayer B



Celebrant The Lord be with you. *People* And al - so with you.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts. *People* We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The Celebrant offers our thanks to God for the grace and mercy made available to us in Christ.

Sanctus: Hymn S-130: *Holy, holy, holy Lord*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

The people stand or kneel as the Celebrant gives thanks for the reconciling work of Christ through his passion and resurrection and prays over the bread and wine.

Celebrant Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

People **We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues with the Eucharistic prayer.

Celebrant By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit of all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever.

People 
A-men.

Celebrant As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now 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 for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Fraction Anthem: Hymn S-152: *Christ our Passover*

Please come forward and stand or kneel at the rail. The priest will place the bread in your outstretched palm (Consecrated rice wafers are available for those with wheat allergies - simply ask the priest). You may dip (intinct) the wafer in the wine in the small cup held by the Eucharistic minister. Alternatively, you may indicate your desire to drink from the common chalice by consuming the bread and remaining at the rail after the Eucharistic minister passes; another Eucharistic minister will bring the large chalice over for you to drink from directly. Please know that Christ is fully present in both the bread and the wine - there is no requirement to receive both. If you do not wish to receive communion, you may come forward, cross your hands over your chest, and receive a blessing.

Communion Anthem: *He Will Prepare the Way* Ruth and Scott Schramm
The St. Andrew's Cherub Choir

God in His mercy and His love sent a prophet from above. He will tell the wondrous story of the heaven born Prince of glory. Yes, he will prepare the way for the Child on Christmas day. John the Baptist is his name, our salvation he'll proclaim. Yes, he will prepare the way for the Child on Christmas day.

Communion Hymn, LEVAS 11: *Prepare ye the Way of the Lord*

When Lay Eucharistic Visitors are taking Holy Communion to those unable to be with us in person, we say the following

Celebrant In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

People **We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup.**

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

Celebrant Let us pray.

People **Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Blessing

Closing Hymn 54: *Savior of the Nations Come*

The young people are invited to come forward during the hymn to participate in the dismissal.

Young people Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude: *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland, BuxWV 211* Johann Pachelbel
(1653-1706)