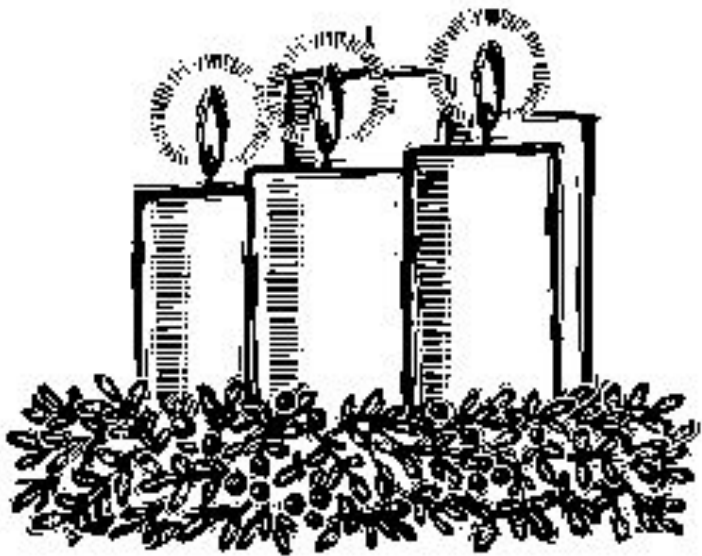


Third Sunday in Advent



December 13, 2020

At Home Worship
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Closter, New Jersey

Our service today is taken from *Hymnal Supplement '98*.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

INVOCATION

Pastor In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation Amen.

CONFESSION

Pastor If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins,

Congregation O Lord, who could stand?

Pastor But with You there is forgiveness;

Congregation therefore You are feared.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Pastor O almighty God, merciful Father,

Congregation I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your punishment now and forever. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.

ENTRANCE HYMN *Savior of the Nations, Come (Stanzas 1-4)*

**1 Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin's Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.**

**2 Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh --
Woman's offspring pure and fresh.**

**3. Here a maid was found with child,
Yet remained a virgin mild.
In her womb this truth was shown:
God was there upon His throne.**

**4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all
From His pure and kingly hall;
God of God, yet fully man,
His heroic course began.**

KYRIE Lord, have mercy on us; Christ have mercy on us;
Lord, have mercy on us.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Glory to God, we give You thanks and praise;
Of heavenly joy and earthly peace we sing.
We worship You, to You our hearts we raise,
Lord God, almighty Father, heavenly King.

Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's only Son,
You bore for us the load of this world's sin.
O Lamb of God, Your glorious victory won,
Receive our prayer, grant us Your peace within.

Alone, O Christ, You only are the Lord,
At God's right hand in majesty most high:
Who, with the Spirit worshiped and adored,
With all the heav'nly host we glorify.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor The Lord be with you.

Congregation And with your spirit.

Pastor Lord Jesus Christ,
we implore You to hear our prayers
and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious
visitation;
for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Congregation Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4. 8-11

- 1 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;
- 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 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.
- 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 wrong;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 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.

10 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.

11 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.

After the reading:

Lector This is the Word of the Lord

Congregation Thanks be to God.

Epistle 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 prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

²³ 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. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

After the reading:

Lector This is the Word of the Lord

Congregation Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

These things are written that you may believe

That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Pastor The Holy Gospel according to St. John, chapter one beginning at verse six.

Congregation Glory to You, O Lord.

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

¹⁹ And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."²¹ And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."²² 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?"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, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"²⁶ John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know,²⁷ even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."²⁸ These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

After the reading:

Pastor This is the Gospel of the Lord

Congregation Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

HYMN OF THE DAY *O Come, O Come Emmanuel (Stanzas 4-5)*

**4 O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. [Refrain]**

***Refrain:*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**5 O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. [Refrain]**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

after each portion of the prayer:

Pastor Lord, in Your mercy,

Congregation hear our prayer.

Pastor Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Congregation Amen.

LITANY (Sung)

Pastor In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor 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.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

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

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For Pastor Holsten, our Pastor in Christ, for all the servants of the church and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For our public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ Let us give thanks to the Lord.

Congregation Alleluia.

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

(Silence for meditation)

Pastor Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.

Congregation To You, O Lord.

Pastor O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, God forever.

Congregation Amen.

Pastor Lord, remember us in Your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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.**

Pastor Let us bless the Lord.

Congregation Thanks be to God.

PRAYER

Pastor Lord 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.

Congregation Amen.

BLESSING

Pastor The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

Congregation Amen.

CLOSING HYMN *Savior of the Nations, Come (Stanzas 5-8)*

**5 God the Father was His source
Back to God He ran His course,
Into hell His road went down,
Back then to His throne and crown.**

**6. For you are the Father's Son
Who in flesh the vict'ry won.
By Your mighty pow'r make whole
All our ills of flesh and soul.**

**7. From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides;
In this light faith now abides.**

**8 Glory to the Father sing,
Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be
Now and through eternity.**