

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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|------------------------------|-------------------|
| The Reverend Ronald Bright | Pastor |
| The Reverend Reholma McCants | Pastor Emeritus |
| Douglas Skalka | Organist |
| Neil Ackerman | Worship Assistant |
| Neil Ackerman | Lector |

Missionaries: The Rev. Dr. Jonathan and Deaconess Cheryl Naumann

Sunday bulletins, news, puzzles, and sermons are available on our website listed above. Video recordings of our weekly services can be viewed on our You Tube channel, *Christ Lutheran Forest Hills Pa.*

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The Third Sunday in Advent

December 13, 2020

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness

Robert C. Lau

RINGING OF THE BELLS/ WELCOME

OPENING HYMN (*please rise and sing*)

Arise, O Christian People

Hymnal p. 354

INVOCATION

The sign of the cross (†) may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism

P: In the name of the Father and of the (†) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION¹

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

P: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

P: Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

(We take a moment of silence before the Lord as we call to mind how we have not properly loved Him, ourselves, or other people.)

C: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

KYRIE

Hymnal p.204

P: Heavenly Father, as we prepare for the arrival of Your Son, enlighten and empower us by Your Word and Spirit that we would remain steadfast in the hope of everlasting life, be strengthened in the peace we have with You through Christ Jesus, overflow with joy because of the abundance of Your mercies, and live in the way of love towards all people.

C: (sung) Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

To God on high be glory And peace to all the earth;
 Goodwill from God in heaven Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!
 We praise and bless You, Father; Your holy name, we sing
 Our thanks for Your great glory, Lord God, our heav'nly King.

To You, O sole begotten, The Father's Son, we pray;
 O Lamb of God, our Savior, You take our sins away.
 Have mercy on us, Jesus; Receive our heartfelt cry,
 Where You in pow'r are seated At God's right hand on high —
 For You alone are holy; You only are the Lord.
 Forever and forever, Be worshiped and adored;
 You with the Holy Spirit Alone are Lord Most High,
 In God the Father's glory. "Amen!" our glad reply.

COLLECT

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

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.

C: **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11

L: The first reading for the Third Sunday in Advent is from chapter sixty-one of Isaiah.

The year of the Lord's favor

Following the reading...

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALMODY

Psalm 126

P: He who goes out weeping, bearing the seeds for sowing,

C: shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

L: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,

C: we were like those who dream.

L: Then our mouth was filled with laughter,

C: and our tongue with shouts of joy;

L: then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

C: The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.

L: Restore our fortunes, O Lord,

C: like streams in the Negeb!

L: Those who sow in tears

C: shall reap with shouts of joy!

P: He who goes out weeping, bearing the seeds for sowing,

C: shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

A: 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.

P: He who goes out weeping, bearing the seeds for sowing,

C: shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

L: The second reading is from chapter five of First Thessalonians.

Rejoice always

Following the reading...

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

**These things are written that you may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:6–8, 19–28

P: The Holy Gospel is according to St. John, chapter one.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

The testimony of John the Baptist

Following the reading...

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED²

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

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Hymnal p. 347

SERMON³

(Please rise)

VERSE

What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?

**I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and will call on the name of the Lord.**

**I will take the cup of salvation
and will call on the name of the Lord.**

**I will pay my vows to the Lord now
in the presence of all His people,
in the courts of the Lord's house,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: Let us pray for ourselves, the church, and the world.

Following each petition:

P: Lord, in Your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

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.

BENEDICTION

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with His favor and (†) give you His peace.

C: **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

Hark the Glad Sound

Hymnal p. 349

POSTLUDE

O God, O Lord of Heaven and Earth

Wayne L. Wold

¹*The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."* John 20:22-23. We take heart that the absolution proclaimed by the pastor is as from the Lord Himself.

²*It is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.* Romans 10:10. Our response to the Word of God that has just been read is our confession of faith in the one, true, triune God.

³Martin Luther teaches us about hearing the Word: "Know, therefore, that you must be concerned not only about hearing, but also about learning and retaining it in memory, and do not think that it is optional with you or of no great importance, but that it is God's commandment, who will require of you how you have heard, learned, and honored His Word." (Large Catechism) *Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!* Luke 11:28