



3rd Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 11, 2022
Peace Lutheran Church, ELCA

WELCOME TO PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

We extend in the name of Christ, a hearty welcome to all who are worshipping with us today. May you find here an experience of true Christian worship and fellowship.

MISSION STATEMENT

As servants of Jesus Christ, we share God's grace and mercy. We welcome and encourage all to grow with us in God's kingdom through praise, worship, and service.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever.

Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.

Let us confront our sins,
and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of new beginnings,

we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.

We have strayed from your paths.

We prepare for war instead of peace.

We dishonor one another and your creation.

Purify us with your refining fire

and set us again on your way of love,

that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,

and welcome your coming among us.

Amen.

People of God,

a new thing is growing in our midst,

a tender branch,

a living sign.

By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder.

You have put on ✝ Christ,

and your sins have been washed away.

Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

Amen.



- 1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing; your own e - ter - nal king!
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
 Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

GREETING

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C. **And also with you.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE &
LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH**

ALL GLORY BE TO GOD

ELW p. 159



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, and peace to earth be
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's
3 To you a - lone, O God, we cry, the Ho - ly One we



giv - en! Let an - gels sing, let all re - ply; good -
au - thor, O Lamb of God, your death a - lone takes
name you; for you a - lone are God most high, one



will breaks forth from heav - en! Lord God Al - might - y,
sin a - way for - ev - er. Stretch out your arms to
liv - ing God we claim you: we wor - ship you, Lord



heav - en's king, we wor - ship you, our thanks we sing, we
ev - 'ry land, and, as you reign at God's right hand, re -
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it ev - er blest, in



praise you for your glo - ry.
ceive our prayer; have mer - cy.
God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. A - men.

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.

C. Amen.

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.

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.

³Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴Say 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."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

⁶then 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;

⁷the 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.

⁸A 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.

⁹No 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.

¹⁰And 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.

P. Word of God. Word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM 146:5-10 READ RESPONSIVELY

⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob ¹ for their help,
whose hope is in the ¹ LORD their God;

⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that ¹ is in them;
who keeps promis- ¹ es forever;**

⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to ¹ those who hunger.
The LORD sets the ¹ captive free.

⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who ¹ are bowed
down; the LORD ¹ loves the righteous.**

⁹The LORD cares ¹ for the stranger;
the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way ¹ of the wicked.

¹⁰**The LORD shall ¹ reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. ¹ Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

⁷Be patient, therefore, beloved, 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. ⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

P. Word of God. Word of life.

C. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 142

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 11th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their

sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

⁷As 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? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹Truly 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.”

P. The gospel of the Lord.

C. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Rev. Mary E. Zupansic

REFLECTION: FOR THOSE AT HOME

Last week John the Baptist was full of religious fervor, certain in his convictions, and bold in his proclamation about the role of the coming Messiah: “Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Matthew 3:10).

But there was no fire. There was no chopping down of anything or anyone. Jesus had arrived and his ministry had begun, but he did *not* come bearing the ax or winnowing fork that John had predicted. Instead, he began healing the sick, casting out demons, and spending a lot of time with the very people many thought were part of the problem. John asks on behalf of his community, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” (Matt. 11:3).

John’s hope (and ours) is not in vain. But this Messiah’s redemption will not come in the way we expect. This Messiah is not a victor in a battle scene or a political coup. Instead, this Messiah is one who shows that greatness and strength are actually found in gentleness and service. It isn’t through fire that God saves the world; it is through God’s own sacrificial love. And the road to this love is not a victory parade, but the one that leads us humbly to a cleansing bath and a laden table.

To those who trust in wealth and power to set things right, what we do each Sunday

must sound silly: gathering around old stories, singing and praying, sharing a little meal. How could any of this change *anything*? But for us wilderness wanderers, it is water in the desert. It is the very presence of God in our midst. Thanks be to God!

HYMN OF THE DAY

HARK THE GLAD SOUND

ELW #239



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751
 Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

APOSTLES' 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

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, we rejoice in the gifts of your Spirit. Equip the global church to magnify your love and peace in every land. We pray for the work of the Lutheran World Federation and ELCA Global Mission. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Abundant God, we rejoice in your creation. Revive lands we have squandered and depleted. Make gardens flourish in cities and neighborhoods. Cleanse polluted air and water so living things may breathe, drink, and praise you. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Righteous God, we rejoice in your justice. End racism and oppression. Deliver all who are unjustly imprisoned or persecuted. Reconcile nations and peoples in conflict. Help us pray for our enemies. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Healing God, we rejoice in your compassion. Comfort any in distress because of worry, illness, or loss. We pray especially for those on our prayer list and for those who have asked for our individual prayers. Strengthen and protect health care workers, rescue teams, crisis counselors, and all who risk themselves to keep others safe. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Abiding God, we rejoice in your company. Give us calm and patient hearts as we gather with family and friends. Keep us mindful of those for whom this season is not happy.

Console the grieving and surround them with loving support. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Faithful God, we rejoice with Mary, Mother of our Lord, and with all the saints, that
your mercy endures for all generations. Look with favor on those who have died and
lead us to joyfully sing of your everlasting promises. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers
and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

THE SHARING OF PEACE

P. The peace of Christ be with you always.

C. **And also with you.**

+ THE MEAL +

OFFERING OF TITHES & GIFTS *Thank you for your continued support of the ministry of
Peace Lutheran Church. We gladly accept your offerings via US Postal Service, Tithe.ly,
or direct deposit from your bank.*

OFFERING HYMN

CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART

ELW p.186

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of



your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

OFFERING PRAYER

- A. Let us pray. Eternal God,
C. **you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

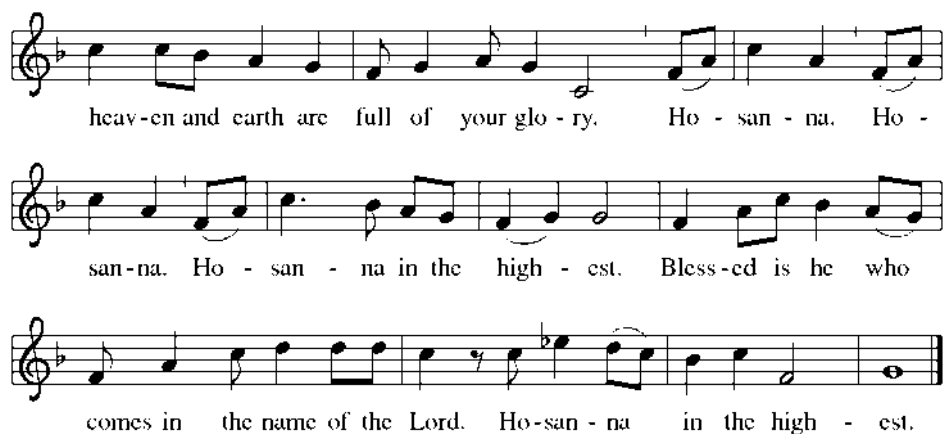
- P. The Lord be with you.
C. **And also with you.**
P. Lift up your hearts.
C. **We lift them to the Lord.**
P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**
P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW p. 144



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na. Ho-san-na. Ho-san-na in the high-est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,
 our Salvation and our Hope,
 we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.
 When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,
 you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.
 At this end of the ages
 your Son Jesus came to bring us your love
 and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
 his life, death, and resurrection,
 we await his coming again

in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us

and on this bread and wine we share:

strengthen our faith,

increase our hope,

and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty God, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church,

both now and forever. **Amen**

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

P. Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

C. **Thanks be to God.**

LAMB OF GOD

ELW p. 146



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have

mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION SONG/HYMNS

CONTEMPORARY

WHAT FEAST OF LOVE

ELW # 487

TABLE BLESSING

P. The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C. Amen.

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

HOLY ONE, NOW LET YOUR SERVANTS GO

Ho - ly One, now let your ser - vants go in
 We our-selves, we know the heal - ing you've pre
 We pro - claim the light to show you to the
 Ho - ly One, now let your ser - vants go in
 4
 peace. Your word and all for glo - ry, has been the world can sec.
 4
 pared, Your word and all for glo - ry, has been the world can sec.
 world, Your word and all for glo - ry, has been the world can sec.
 peace. Your word and all for glo - ry, has been the world can sec.
 ra - el. Your word and all for glo - ry, has been the world can sec.
 ful - filled. Your word and all for glo - ry, has been the world can sec.
 ful - filled. Your word and all for glo - ry, has been the world can sec.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

- A. Let us Pray, God for whom we wait,
C. in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

- P. God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever.
C. Amen.

SENDING HYMN

JOY TO THE WORLD

ELW #267



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy. re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH. English melody. 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

DISMISSAL

P. Go in peace. Christ is near.

C. **Thanks be to God.**

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ABOUT THIS WEEKS TEXT

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.

THOSE WHO HAVE ASKED FOR OUR PRAYERS:

Judy Barhoover, Pete Ellertsen, Larry Weyhrich, Pamela Scott

If you would like to be added to the prayer list, or know someone who would like to be added to our list, please fill out a Prayer Request Card, send an email to peace.lutheran@comcast.net OR call the Office at (217)546-7646. Other than those in the Military will remain on the prayer list for two weeks unless otherwise notified.

Please note—for privacy reasons, we must have an individual's permission to add their name.

ZOOM MEETINGS/EVENTS THIS WEEK

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| SUNDAY, DEC. 11 | In Person Worship/Livestream—9:30am Drive thru Communion—11:00 to 11:30 am |
| MONDAY, DEC 12 | Quilters—6:00pm |
| WEDNESDAY, DEC. 14 | Faith Formation—5:30pm Potluck—5:45pm Advent Worship—6:30pm Choir Rehearsal—7:00pm |
| THURSDAY, DEC. 15 | Church Council Mtg—6:00pm |
| SUNDAY, DEC. 18 | In Person Worship/Livestream—9:30am Children’s Christmas Program During Worship |

ASSISTING THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 11:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Presiding & Preaching: Rev. Mary E. Zupansic | Camera: Janet Kocis |
| Assisting Minister: Elizabeth Mitchell | PowerPoint: Linda Rice |
| Musician: Brenda Peck | Fellowship: Lois Moorman |
| Ushers: Mike & Sandy Barker | Flowers: To the Glory of God |



BIRTHDAYS

December 11—Sandy Barker , Cayce Bell, Brad Harris
December 12—Elizabeth Mitchell



CEREAL
CANS OF SOUP
GREEN BEANS
SPAGHETTI
PEANUT BUTTER
CANNED FRUIT

SUPPORTING GRACE FOOD PANTRY



Christmas Eve Worship

Saturday, December 24

5:00 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church
2804 West Jefferson St
Springfield, IL

Q Come,
Let Us Adore Him,
Christ the Lord.



CHRISTMAS DAY
DECEMBER 25TH
WORSHIP @
9:30 AM



**Blackhawk Gifts Due
December 11th**

Gifts should be
wrapped and tagged with
FIRST and LAST names.



Holy Disruption

A Mid-Week Advent Service

Breathing – 11/30

Releasing – 12/7

Receiving – 12/14

5:45pm – Soup Supper

6:30pm – Worship



Peace Lutheran Church
2800 West Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62702
Phone: 217-546-7646
E-mail: peace.lutheran@comcast.net

**Children's
Christmas Program**

Sunday, December 18