

3rd Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 17, 2023
Peace Lutheran Church, ELCA

## WELCOME TO PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Whether you are joining us in-person or on-line we are blessed to have you worshipping with us today. We pray that our time of worship together further encourages and strengthens our call to discipleship.

## MISSION STATEMENT

As disciples 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.

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

**PRELUDE** — Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus, Prichard, Robert Thygerson, arr., © 2000 Lorenz Publishing Co. Organist — Brenda Peck

#### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin. Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are careless with creation's bounty.
Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world.
Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of + Jesus Christ,

your sins are forgiven.

God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.



Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965 Music: BESANCON, French carol

Text @ Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates.

## **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.



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# CANTICLE OF PRAISE AND LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH





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# Rejoice!

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

## + WORD +

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

<sup>1</sup>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; <sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; <sup>3</sup>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.  $^4$ 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.

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.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

#### SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

<sup>16</sup>Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise the words of prophets, <sup>21</sup>but test everything; hold fast to what is good; <sup>22</sup>abstain from every form of evil.

<sup>23</sup>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. <sup>24</sup>The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.





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## GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

The holy gospel according to St. John the 1st chapter.

# Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

<sup>19</sup>This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup>He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." <sup>22</sup>Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup>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.

<sup>24</sup>Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup>They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" <sup>26</sup>John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup>the one

who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." <sup>28</sup>This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

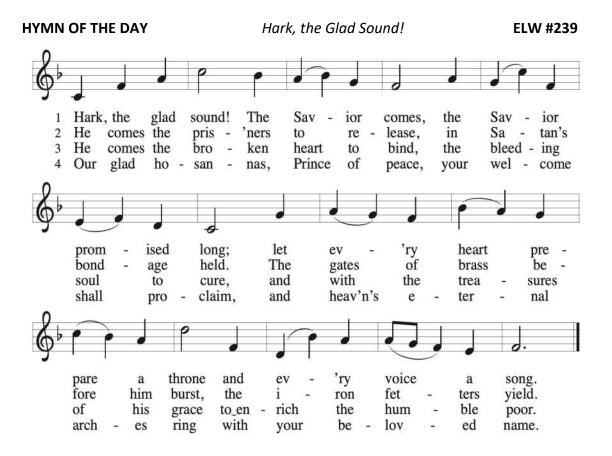
The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

#### **SERMON**

#### **PASTOR MARY E. ZUPANSIC**

#### MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION



Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751

Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

#### **APOSTLE'S 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

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

Merciful God, receive our prayer.

#### THE SHARING OF PEACE

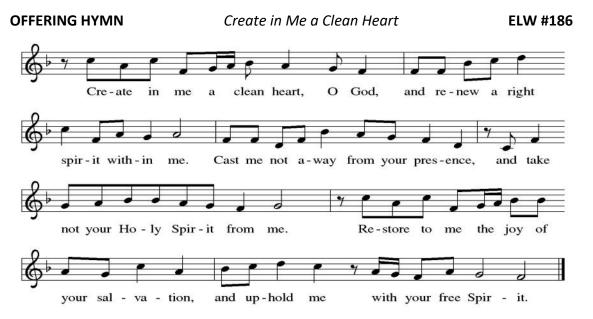
The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.** 

**CHOIR ANTHEM** - Waiting for the Promise © 2022 Lorenz Publishing Co.

Jim Turner—Clarinet

#### + 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.



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

#### OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

#### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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.

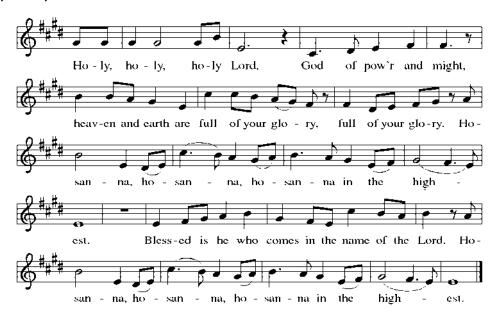
It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

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. 190** 



#### THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, 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.

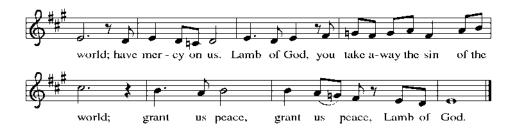
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

#### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

LAMB OF GOD ELW P. 191





## **COMMUNION SONG/HYMNS**

Waiting Here for You Contemporary
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light ELW #815

#### **TABLE BLESSING**

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

## Amen.

# **POST COMMUNION CANTICLE** Holy One, Now Let Your Servants Go



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#### POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Generous God,

in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.



#### THE SAVIOR'S BIRTH — A NATIVITY SKIT

CAST: NARRATOR: CARTER KIM
JOSEPH: ELI COOK

MARY: MACY MORRISON W/BABY ISAAC

INN KEEPER #1/WISE MAN: SPENCER KIM
INN KEEPER #2/WISE MAN: LUCAS ROACH
INN KEEPER #3/WISE MAN: HARRISON ALLEN

SHEPHERDS & SHEEP: LITTLE LAMBS (OLIVER, JACOB, NIELSEN, KARINA) AND

**MOMS** 

**ANGEL:** AMANDA KIM



O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!



**HYMN** O Little Town of Bethlehem (verse 1)

**ELW #279** 

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by; yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.



What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!



Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.



**HYMN** 

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (verse 1)

**ELW #270** 

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king; Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled." Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies! With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlemen!" Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"



**HYMN** 

We Three Kings (verse 1)

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright; westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!



**HYMN** 

Joy to the World (verse 1)

**ELW #267** 

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.



#### **BLESSING**

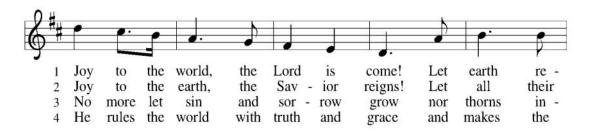
The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit + remain upon you now and forever.

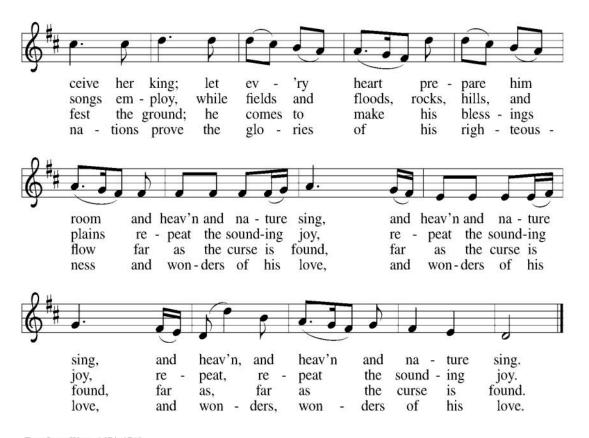
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Joy to the World (vv. 2-4)

**ELW #267** 





Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

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

#### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE** — The Brightest Trumpet - Gerald Peterson, © 2000 Lorenz Publishing Co. Organist — Brenda Peck

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# **ABOUT THIS WEEK'S TEXT**

"REJOICE ALWAYS," BEGINS THE READING FROM 1 THESSALONIANS. ISAIAH AND THE PSALMIST MAKE CLEAR THAT GOD IS TURNING OUR MOURNING INTO LAUGHTER AND SHOUTS OF JOY. "ALL GOD'S CHILDREN GOT A ROBE," GO THE WORDS OF A SPIRITUAL. IT IS NOT SO MUCH A STATELY, FORMAL, PRESSED OUTFIT AS IT IS A SET OF PARTY CLOTHES, CLOTHES WE ARE HAPPY TO WEAR. WE RECEIVE THAT ROBE IN BAPTISM, AND IN WORSHIP WE GATHER FOR A FORETASTE OF GOD'S PARTY.

# THOSE WHO HAVE ASKED FOR OUR PRAYERS:

PETE ELLERTSEN, DEBI ELLERTSEN, PAULA TONELLATO, NORM KOEFOED, IVY KOEFOED, RON WEBER, GENE WALKER, MARK HENDERSON, BILL SPINDEL

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

# **ASSISTING THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 17:**

PRESIDING AND PREACHING: PASTOR MARY E. ZUPANSIC

**ASSISTING:** DOUG MCFARLAN

**USHERS:** JOE HENKLE, LINDA SHUDROWITZ

CAMERA:

POWERPOINT:

MUSICIAN: BRENDA PECK

FELLOWSHIP: EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

FLOWERS: LIBBY AND BOB LETTERLY — IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, MARK

# **ZOOM MEETINGS/EVENTS THIS WEEK**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17** IN PERSON WORSHIP/LIVESTREAM — 9:30AM

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM DURING WORSHIP
DECORATE SANCTUARY FOR CHRISTMAS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18 STAMP CLUB — 6:00PM

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL — 5:00PM

FULL COUNCIL — 6:00PM

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

# **ZOOM MEETINGS/EVENTS THIS WEEK (Cont.)**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20 ADVENT DINNER/SERVICE — 5:30PM

CHOIR PRACTICE — 7:00PM

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24** 

NO MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE — 4:30PM



Plan to join us Wednesday evenings for our Midweek Advent Services. This year we will follow a "Dinner Church" style service. We gather in the fellowship hall at 5:30p.m. for a meal, scripture, discussion, and the breaking of bread! Come, as we step out of the business of the season and spend time

PAUSING, PREPARING, @ PONDERING.

(December 6, 13, 20)

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**



# PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER!!

\*\*HELP US KEEP OUR PANTRY SHELVES STOCKED!! DONATIONS CAN BE PUT DIRECT-LY IN THE MICROPANTRY OR DROPPED OFF AT THE CHURCH OFFICE. THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATE!!

\*\*SPONSORS ARE NEEDED FOR FELLOWSHIP TIME IN 2024! If you would like to provide cookies for Fellowship time after worship, please sign up in the Narthex or contact Linda Rice at 217-494-2658 or <a href="mailto:linearing:rice10650@gmail.com">lrice10650@gmail.com</a>. Thanks to all our sponsors for 2023!



## ALTAR FLOWERS

Sponsors needed for 2024! Call Yvonne in the church office to pick your date! 217-546-7646 \$35.00



Peace Lutheran Church 2800 West Jefferson Springfield, IL 62702 Phone: 217-546-7646

E-mail: peace.lutheran@comcast.net



If you would like a visit from Pastor Mary or you have a pastoral emergency, please call Pastor on her cell phone at 920.671.4338.