



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

4515 Dobie Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517-349-0620

Third Sunday in Advent

- To make disciples for Jesus Christ. . .
- . . .we **Gather** in faith for worship, prayer,
study and fellowship
- . . .we **Equip** the people of God with a faith
that works in real life
- . . .we **Serve** the world in the name of Jesus Christ

Pastor:..... Ellen Schoepf
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Introduction to the day

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

PRELUDE

“Once He Came in Blessing”

arr. Michael Burkhardt

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

God for whom we wait,
in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.
We falter in our call to tend your creation.
We find our sense of self in material wealth.
We fear those different from ourselves.
We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.
Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace.
Amen.

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!
Through the power of the Holy Spirit,
✝ your sins are forgiven.

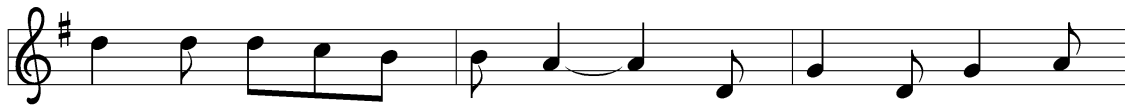
You are children of the Most High,
inheritors of the eternal promise,
and recipients of divine mercy.
God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.
Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing,
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in -
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen

Text and music © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

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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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Third Sunday in Advent – Love

Leader 1: In a world where so many experience hatred,
God lights a candle of *love* in our hearts.

We wait together for a Savior,
who will be Immanuel, Christ the Lord.

Hear the word of the Lord:

Leader 2: *For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
So that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.*

John 3:16

(We light the first, second and third Advent candle)

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

A reading from Zephaniah.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing

¹⁸as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Philippians 4:4-7

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

A reading from Philippians.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Emmanuel

C C/E F G G⁷ C C/B \flat
Em - man - u - el, Em - man - u - el,

A A/C \sharp Dm G⁷ G/B C
his name is called Em - man - u - el;

C/E F G G⁷ C C/B \flat
God with us, re - vealed in us;

A A/C \sharp Dm G⁷ F/C C
his name is called Em - man - u - el.

Text and music: Bob McGee
Text and music © 1976 C. A. Music



GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even 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.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

People, Look East



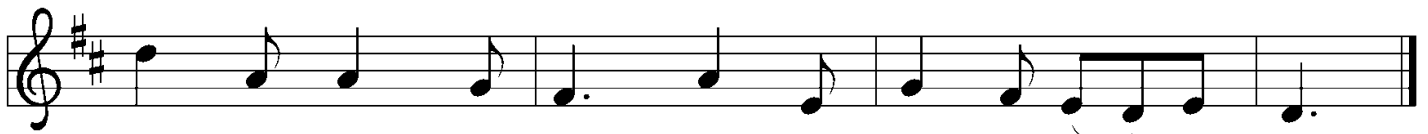
1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965
Music: BESANÇON, French carol
Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

Prayers of intercession are prayed. To each petition, the assembly responds:

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

The presiding minister concludes the prayers, and the assembly responds:

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect.

Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

PEACE

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

DIALOGUE

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.**

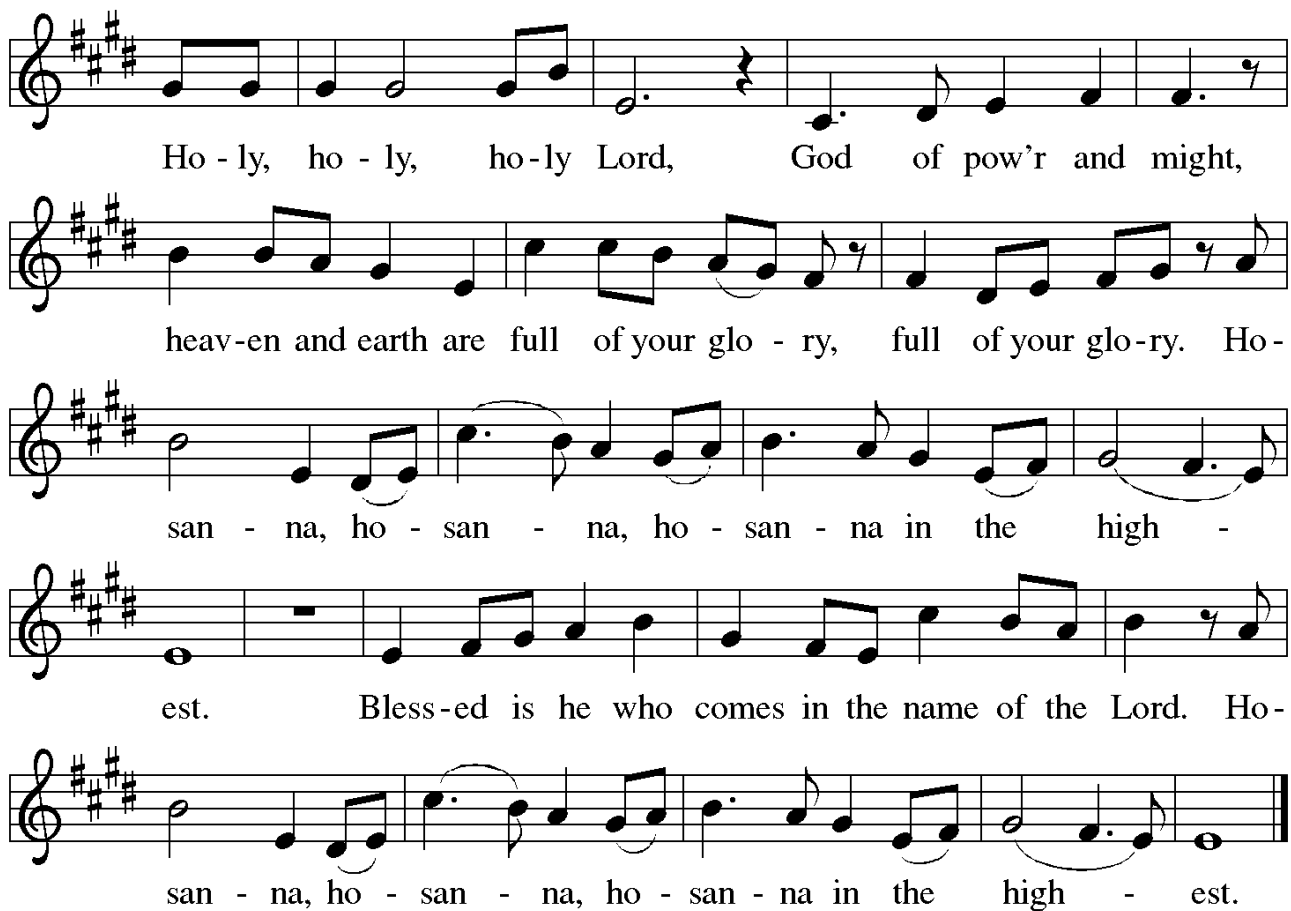
PREFACE

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, 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, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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 forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to Christ's banquet.

Feast on God's gift of grace.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

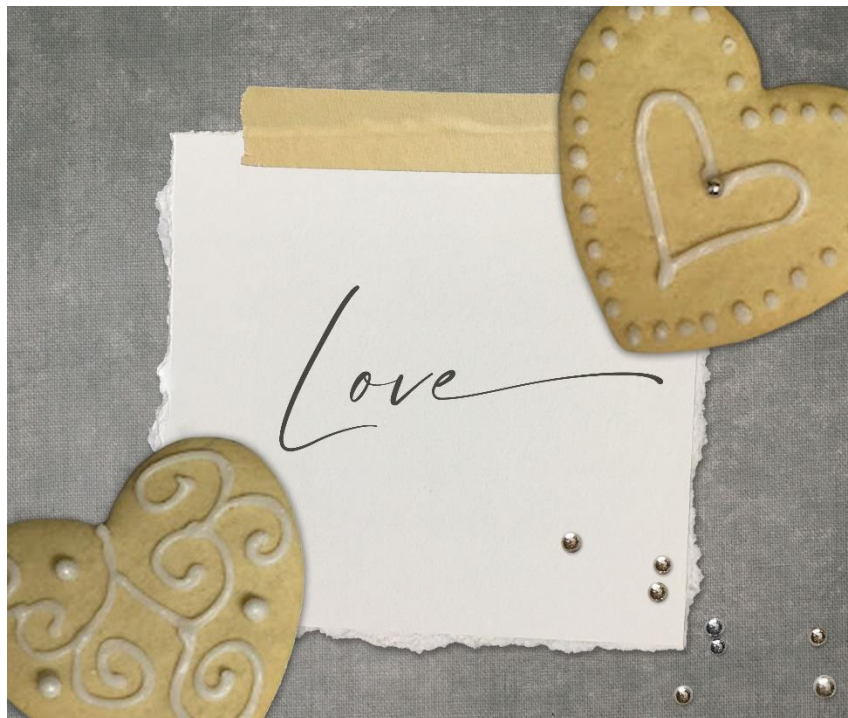
God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

Amen.



SENDING SONG

Joy to the World

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
and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

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.
heav'n and na - ture sing,

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748
Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Comfort, Comfort, Now My People”

arr. Gerald Near

Year to Date	January – October 31
Income	\$ 217,472
Expenses	<u>\$ 237,900</u>
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (20,428)

11/28/21

General Fund	\$ 441.10
Parish House	\$ 50.00
Pantry Fund	<u>\$ 2,500.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 2,991.10
Simply Giving	
General	\$ 900.00
Pantry	<u>\$ 50.00</u>
Subtotal	<u>\$ 950.00</u>
Total	\$ 3,941.10

12/5/21

General Fund	\$ 3,000.00
Youth	\$ 15.00
Memorials	
Consumers Energy Rebate	
	\$ 7,107.76
Staff Appreciation	\$ 100.00
World Hunger	<u>\$ 50.00</u>
Subtotal	\$10,272.76
Simply Giving	
General	\$ 3,715.00
Building	<u>\$ 25.00</u>
Total	\$14,012.76

For a quick overview of giving options, please visit the Faith Lutheran Church website and look for the giving button in the top right corner.
www.faithlutheranokemos.org

Advent Season News

Dear Friends,

We continue to monitor the spread of Covid-19 in our community. Levels at the present time are higher than they have been throughout the entire pandemic, and hospitals are overwhelmed. Covid is everywhere. We encourage everyone of you to GET VACCINATED, GET BOOSTED, and WEAR MASKS WHEN YOU GO OUT! These actions are truly necessary to mitigate the virus and keep you out of the hospital.

As we continue to monitor statistics in our community, our hope for worship this month is to:

Online Worship only on **Sunday, December 12**

Gather in-person on **Sunday, December 19**

Gather in-person for **Christmas Eve**

4:00 PM & 10:00 PM Services. You will need to sign up through the

Eventbrite link that has been included below to indicate which service you will attend.

We know there will be Covid breakouts as a result of Christmas gatherings. Therefore, our services on December 26 and January 2 will be ONLINE ONLY. Our Synod is providing congregations with online services for those Sundays, and we have decided to participate in the Synod's offering. We will reassess community spread after this point to determine whether or not we will be able to worship in-person by January 9.

Please note: When we do gather in-person, MASKS ARE REQUIRED, SOCIAL DISTANCING IS REQUIRED, and we encourage you to be vaccinated.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. We will keep you updated throughout the next week regarding final decisions.

I continue to pray that all of you have a Blessed Christmas.

Pastor Ellen

Christmas Eve Services

This year, we will offer two Christmas Eve services.

One at 4:00 P.M. and one at 10:00 P.M.

To aid with social distancing, we have removed some of the chairs from the Sanctuary. Due to the limited seating capacity, we are asking people to sign up for the Christmas Eve service they will be attending. We will be limiting capacity to no more than 125 people per service.

Please use this following link to sign up:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/christmas-eve-service-tickets-198944226537>

If you are unable to sign up using the link, please contact Katie at klove@faithlutheranokemos.org or 517-349-0620.

