



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



3rd Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

10:30 Service of the Word

In 1 Corinthians 13 St. Paul writes that the only things that really abide are: faith, hope, and love. Then he goes on to say that the greatest of these is love. What is it that makes love not only something that endures but is actually the greatest power in the universe? Love like this is not an intense feeling of desire or a sappy sentiment in a card. Love like this is powerful, determined, and unrelenting.

Welcome to worship today!

This order of worship is designed to accompany what is happening live on Zoom. In order to make things work smoothly please keep your computer's microphone off unless you have a speaking part. It may be helpful to use a headset or earbuds to minimize feedback. You are welcome to use the chat feature to ask questions or provide feedback. Following worship we will have a time for those who would like to chat.

† OPENING †

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

C: Amen

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Loving and forgiving God,

C: we confess that we are held captive by sin.

In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.

We have not welcomed the stranger;

we have not loved our neighbor;

we have not been Christ to one another.

Restore us, O God.

Wake us up and turn us from our sin.

Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

P: People of God, hear this glad news:

by God's endless grace

your sins are forgiven, and you are free-

free from all that holds you back

and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.

May you be strengthened in God's love,

comforted by Christ's peace,

and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Opening Music People, Look East
(For music see Hymn 248 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People look east, and sing today –
Love, the Guest, is on the way.**
2. **Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flow’r may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today –
Love, the Rose, is on the way.**
3. **Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today –
Love, the Star, is on the way.**
4. **Angels announce with shouts of mirth
him who brings new life to earth.
Set ev’ry peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today –
Love, the Lord, is on the way.**

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Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Direct us, Lord God, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and extend to us your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

† WORD †

First Reading Deuteronomy 6:4-14

B: ⁴Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. ⁶Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. ⁸Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, ⁹and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. ¹⁰When the LORD your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—a land with fine, large cities that you did not build, ¹¹houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you have eaten your fill, ¹²take care that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹³The LORD your God you shall fear; him you shall serve, and by his name alone you shall swear. ¹⁴Do not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who are all around you.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word the Lord

C: Thanks be to God!

Scripture Poetry Psalm 13 (*read together*)

**C: Lord, will you ever remember me,
why keep turning away from me?
Must I carry this grief forever,
how long endure this pain?
Must my enemies always win?**

**My God, look at me, answer me,
shine on me or I will die;
never let my enemies boast,
“See how you fall! I have won!”
I trust in your love
and rejoice, for you save me;
I will sing to the Lord
who treats me with kindness.**

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 13

D: [Paul writes] If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have

prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word the Lord

C: Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation (Romans 8:28)

C: Alleluia. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading John 21:15-19

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 21st chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” ¹⁷He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” ¹⁹(He said this to

indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

After the reading:

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Response to the Word

P: In Christ you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

C: We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

E: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**C: 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.**

E: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

C: pray in the Holy Spirit.

(Jude 20)

E: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

C: look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. *(Jude 21)*

E: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

**C: Everything old has passed away;
behold, everything has become new!**

(2 Corinthians 5:17)

‡ PRAYER ‡

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. These three petitions will be read by people in the congregation:

A: God of exiles and wanderers, give a homeland to refugees. Provide housing for those whose dwellings have been destroyed. Protect street people from the cold and be with teenage runaways. Uphold the work of ELCA Good Gifts, Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and all disaster relief organizations. Comfort all who feel isolated from others. Lord in your mercy...

C: Hear our prayer.

B: Guide us to witness to your love with all those whom we meet, whether they be in our neighborhoods or far away. Be with missionaries we support as they share your love: the Rev. Karen Anderson and the Rev. Matthew Nickoloff. Lord in your mercy...

C: Hear our prayer.

E: God of the sorrowing and the brokenhearted, give health to the sick, relief to medical workers, and comfort to mourners. Attend to those with lifelong illness. We beg for an end to the coronavirus and a fair distribution of the vaccines. Lord in your mercy...

C: Hear our prayer.

The pastor concludes the prayer:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Peace

A: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

A: We share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with messages of Christ's peace.

Special Music

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: 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**

† ENDING †

Blessing

P: The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,
now and forever.

C: Amen

Closing Music All Earth Is Hopeful

(for music, please turn to Hymn 266 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people who struggle to see
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.**
2. **People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";
she conceived him, "God with us," our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.**
3. **Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;
new highways opened, new protocols declared.**

**Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!**

**4. We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see
our Jesus is with us and ever sets us free.**

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Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.

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