

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025

PRELUDE
Retherford

Becky

Gathering

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,
**we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.**

God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
† You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

ELW #242 "Awake! Awake and Greet the New

Morn"

1 Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,
for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,
behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor,
to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heav'nly door

and lives now inside us forever.

- 2 To us, to all in sorrow and fear,
Emmanuel comes a-singing,
his humble song is quiet and near,
yet fills the earth with its ringing;
music to heal the broken soul
and hymns of lovingkindness,
the thunder of his anthems roll
to shatter all hatred and blindness.
- 3 In darkest night his coming shall be,
when all the world is despairing,
as morning light so quiet and free,
so warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song,
the lame shall leap in wonder,
the weak be raised above the strong,
and weapons be broken asunder.
- 4 Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night,
though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light,
be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer
and love our endless story;
may God fill ev'ry day we share
and bring us at last into glory.

THE GREETING

ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING - The Candle Of Joy

Let us pray. O God, **who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name, as we anticipate joy, let us pray for all who are unhoused, incarcerated, and in need whom we fail to notice. We pray for those weighed down in grief and loss, and for those who are lonely. By your word, eternal God, death is overcome, Christ is raised from the tomb, and new life springs forth in the power of your Holy Spirit. May we boldly proclaim this good news in our words and deeds to the neighbors around us. May we and all rejoice in your goodness and mercy. Through Jesus Christ whose coming transforms the world. Amen.**

READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

DIALOG

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD CANDLE: "Joy"

ADVENT HYMN ACS #901- vs 1, 3 "Now the Heavens Start to Whisper"

- 1 Now the heavens start to whisper,
as the veil is growing thin.
Earth from slumber wakes to listen
to the stirring, faint within:
seed of promise, deeply planted,
child to spring from Jesse's stem!
Like the soil beneath the frostline,
hearts grow soft to welcome him.
- 3 Christ, eternal Sun of justice,
Christ, the rose of wisdom's seed,
come to bless with fire and fragrance
hours of yearning, hurt, and need.
In the lonely, in the stranger,
in the outcast, hid from view;
Child who comes to grace the manger,
teach our hearts to welcome you.

FAMILY CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PAGEANT

Opening Scene - The Nativity
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Scene Two - The Census in Judea
"Silent Night" ELW #281 - verse 1

Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin, mother and child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace

Scene Three - The Shepherds
"O Holy Night" - vocalist Rick Lombardo

Scene Four - The Angels
"Angels We Have Heard on High"

Scene Five - Go To The Manger
"Go Tell It On The Mountain"

Scene Six - The Wise Men
 “We Three Kings”

Scene Seven - The Nativity
 “Joy to the World” ELW #267

- 1 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.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
 Let all their songs employ,
 while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 repeat the sounding joy,
 repeat the sounding joy,
 repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
 nor thorns infest the ground;
 he comes to make his blessings flow
 far as the curse is found,
 far as the curse is found,
 far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
 and makes the nations prove
 the glories of his righteousness
 and wonders of his love,
 and wonders of his love,
 and wonders, wonders of his love.

Conclusion

Word

GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-11

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

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

Responses: God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

OFFERING & HYMN

ELW #253

“He Came Down”

- 1 He came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
hallelujah forevermore.
- 2 He came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light;
hallelujah forevermore.
- 3 He came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
hallelujah forevermore.
- 4 He came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
hallelujah forevermore.

LORD’S PRAYER

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

**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.**

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

May God who comes among us, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ELW #248 “People, Look East”

- 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.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**