

# First Lutheran Church, Morris MN

## Order of Worship for Sunday, December 13, 2020: Third Sunday in Advent

**Gathering** *We enter into Advent, a season of longing and anticipation; longing for God's presence and saving power, with the Psalmist we pray "Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved." (Psalm 80:7)*

### Welcoming & Announcements

### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

### Confession & Forgiveness

*In the name of the Father, and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

*God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

*In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

### Hymn: "Prepare the Royal Highway" #264

1. Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near!  
Let ev'ry hill and valley a level road appear!  
Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story;  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!
2. God's people, see him coming: your own eternal king!  
Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!  
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you!  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!
3. Then fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king!  
Your king, yet ev'ry nation its tribute too may bring.  
All lands will bow before him; their voices join your singing:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!
4. His is no earthly kingdom; it come from heav'n above.  
His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love.  
So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!

### 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

*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

### Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

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; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 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. 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. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. I 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.

### Reading: Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, **then were we like those who dream.**

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy. **Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."**

The Lord has done great things for us, **and we are glad indeed.**

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, **like the watercourses of the Negeb.**

Those who sowed with tears **will reap with songs of joy.**

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, **will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

### Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. 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. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

### Gospel Acclamation Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

**Gospel:** John 1:6-8, 19-28      *(response after announcement of Gospel: **Glory to you, O Lord**)*

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 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. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing

*(response after reading of Gospel: **Praise to you, O Christ**)*

## **Message**

**Hymn:** "All Earth is Hopeful" #266

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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## **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 again 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.

### Offering/Offertory

### Prayers

### Lord's Prayer

Sharing the Peace *Please share a sign of peace with one another*

## **Sending**

### Hymn: "He Came Down" #253

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

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### Benediction

*Go in peace, serve the Lord!*

**Thanks be to God!**

## **Remember in your prayers**

Jessica Nelson, Dick Bluth, Family and friends of Genevieve Morrissey, Mick Rose, those affected by COVID-19, those who serve in the military, families of victims of war, terrorism and violence, those in our nursing homes and those who are homebound. Continue to pray for the overseas missionary we support, Pastor Alex LaChappelle serving as a pastor of Nairobi International Lutheran in Kenya, Africa. Note: you may honor a loved one and support Pastor LaChappelle in Kenya. Contact the church office for information.