

**Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church & School
Grafton, WI
December 17, 2023**

3rd Sunday in Advent

Today's Focus: Prepare yourself by rejoicing! For Christ was sent to proclaim God's favor on you.

Welcome!

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Presiding:
Organist:

Jonathan Fischer
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The 10:30 service is livestreamed for our members at home.



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OurSaviorGrafton.org
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Advent Gathering Song

The opening hymns and songs of Christian worship mean to "gather" individual Christians into a worshiping assembly.

The cantor will sing the refrain once.

The congregation will then join and continuously sing:

Come, come Emmanuel.

Come, Emmanuel.

During the singing of the refrain the cantor sings:

For the Spirit of God has come.
Tell of freedom to captives, and come.
For God's justice and praise will come.
We rejoice in the Lord, and come.
The Almighty works marvels, so come.
Oh make straight his way and come.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

Confession

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Almighty and merciful Father,

we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.

We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.

We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.

**We have done those things that we should not have done,
and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

Have mercy on us, Lord!

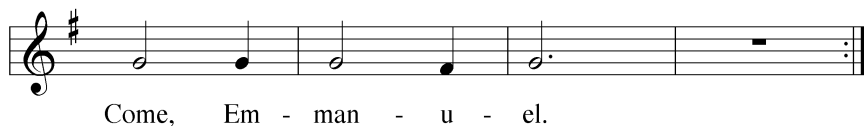
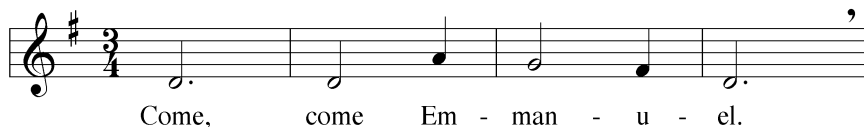
**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,
according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

Silence for meditation and reflection

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

Amen.

All sing the refrain while the cantor sings the verses



Lord have mercy upon us and come
Christ, have mercy upon us and come
Lord, have mercy upon us and come

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Isaiah 61:1–3,10-11

¹The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.
¹⁰I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation

and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
"For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

We light three Advent candles remembering Jesus, the Light of the world. He came to defeat the prince of darkness.

We remember Jesus, who came in answer to his people's prayers. John proclaimed him the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

We hear his call to see the light.

We light three Advent candles as a sign of our trust and confidence.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

Three Advent candles are lit.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray continually, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not treat prophecies with contempt ²¹but test them all; hold on to what is good, ²²reject every kind of evil.

²³May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The First Noel

Sung by the choir.

Stand

Gospel

John 1:6–8,19–28

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

¹⁹Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."

²¹They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

²²Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

²⁴Now the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

²⁶“I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.”

²⁸This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

324 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

CW 324

Sermon

Space is included for you to take notes during the sermon.

Stand

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Gracious Lord, you sent your Son into our world to destroy the power of Satan and restore the human race as your children and heirs. Work in us during this Advent season so that we may rejoice in the coming of our Savior and long for his coming again.

Make us eager to receive the King who comes to save us.

Use the preaching of your holy law to rid us of all delusions that we can gain your love with our own efforts. Move us to realize how hopeless we are because of sin and to feel sorrow for what we have done wrong.

Lead us to be honest about our sinful status in your sight.

Lift up our hearts to see the King who comes to save. Reveal to us his willingness to take on our human form and stand in our place. Show us the power he extends in his Word and sacraments to make us your children and keep us in faith. Thrill us with his promise to come and take us to our eternal home to live with you forever.

Open our eyes to see and believe the wonders of the Savior's love.

As we live with Christ and trust in him, move us to turn away from sin day after day with the strength your Holy Spirit provides. When we fall, forgive us and renew us to love and serve you and all people.

Empower us and guide us to walk with Christ by faith.

Protect us from the distractions that come at this time of the year. Even in gift-giving and celebrating, keep our hearts focused on Christ and his forgiving love.

Give us joy at his coming at Christmas, his coming in the gospel, and his coming again.

Move us to share with others the most important gift of this season, the truth about Jesus. Even in busy times lead us to pray for those whose joy is diminished because of sickness, pain, or loss. Give us opportunities to provide help to those in need.

May others see the love of Christ in our words and actions.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Loving Lord, work in us during this Advent season so that our joy may be genuine and may rest in the promises of the King who comes to save.

Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Offering

Our Savior's ministries are supported by the joyful gifts of her members. If you are not a member of Our Savior, please do not feel obligated to give an offering. It is our privilege and pleasure to serve you with God's Word today.

Please sign the friendship register and pass it down the pew.

The Sacrament

Stand

Preface

CW 165

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en-ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san - na, ho -
san - na, ho-san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he,
bless-ed is he, 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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, 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.**

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my ✝ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my ✝ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - - - men.

Be seated

Distribution

Out of sincere love for the truth of God's Word and precious souls, we practice closed Communion in our congregation. This has been the practice of Christians for centuries and is thoroughly scriptural. It neither questions the faith nor judges the heart of any individual, yet expects that there be full doctrinal agreement among those who commune. For this reason, we ask that only members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) join us for the Lord's Supper today. If you have any questions please speak with Pastor Fischer after the service.

315 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

CW 315

Stand

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.
Amen.

517 Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

CW 517

Acknowledgments

Setting One from Christian Worship

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