

# SAINT MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

318 Chester Avenue • Moorestown, NJ 08057-2526

*Rev. Dr. Eric J. Trozzo, Pastor*



## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*December 13, 2020 9:30AM*

### PRELUDE

*Lost in the Night ELW 243*

## Gathering

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*The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

**Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. (silence for self-reflection)

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.**

### ABSOLUTION

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

### 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.**

### KYRIE

*ELW Page 120*



## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### LIGHTING OF WREATH

In Advent, we look for Christ to come in fullness, so that all may know the peace, goodness and justice of Christ's love in the world. In the lighting of the flame we look to Christ in hope.

## Word

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*God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.*

### CHILDREN'S TIME

#### FIRST READING ISAIAH 61:1-4, 8-11

1The 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; 2to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 3to 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. 4They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. 8For 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. 9Their 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. 10I 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. 11For 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.

*Response after the conclusion: The word of the Lord.*

#### PSALM PSALM 126

1When the Lord restored the for- | tunes of Zion, then were we like | those who dream. 2Then 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." 3The Lord has done great | things for us, and we are | glad indeed. 4Restore our for- | tunes, O Lord, like the watercourses | of the Negeb. R 5Those who | sowed with tears will reap with | songs of joy. 6Those who go out weeping, carry- | ing the seed, will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves. R

#### SECOND READING 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

16Rejoice always, 17pray without ceasing, 18give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19Do not quench the Spirit. 20Do not despise the words of prophets, 21but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22abstain from every form of evil. 23May 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. 24The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

*Response after the conclusion: The word of the Lord.*

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*All Earth Is Hopeful (ELW 266)*



## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### **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 to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 19This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." 21And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." 22Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' " as the prophet Isaiah said. 24Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. 25They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" 26John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, 27the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." 28This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

*Response after the conclusion: The gospel of the Lord.*

### **SERMON**

**THE REV. DR. ERIC J. TROZZO**

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**

*Hark the Glad Sound ELW 239*

### **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 into hell.  
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**

*Response: Your mercy is great.*

### **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.



And also with you.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

**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.**

## **Sending**

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*God blesses us and sends us into the world to serve our neighbor.*

### **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

**Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **POSTLUDE**

*O Lord, How Shall I Meet You ELW 241*

**DECEMBER 13, 2020  
THIRD SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT**

**taking†  
faith  
home**

*Jesus brings good news.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 1:6-8, 19-28</b>	<b>John's witness to the light</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11</b>	<b>Good news of deliverance</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>1 Thessalonians 5:16-24</b>	<b>A call to rejoice</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Romans 10:14-17</b>	<b>Those who bring good news</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>1 Thessalonians 3:6-13</b>	<b>Timothy's encouraging report</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Genesis 18:1-18</b>	<b>A son for Abraham and Sarah</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 126</b>	<b>A people who dream</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Luke 1:26-38</b>	<b>The birth of Jesus foretold</b>

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

*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. Isaiah 61:1 (NRSV)*

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

God of power and might, help us to be aware of the needs of people and be prepared to bring joy and good news to people through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

May this gift of food fill our hearts with laughter and make us shout with joy. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the God of peace make you holy in spirit and soul and body. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

**DECEMBER 13, 2020**

**HYMN OF THE WEEK**

*Joy to the World*

**taking†  
faith  
home**

**WEEKLY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Think or talk about a time when you felt sad or brokenhearted.
- When you feel discouraged, who do you talk to or what do you do to feel better?
- Jesus comes to change our lives. How does Jesus make a difference for your life and the lives of others?

**DEVOTIONS**

*Read:* Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11.

An American emailed his friend in Zimbabwe and asked if he was well. The response was "I am well if you are well." That response comes with a communal understanding of wellness. We can't be well on our own. Neither can we truly feel okay about ourselves if we feel safe and protected while our neighbor does not feel okay. Isaiah 61:1-2 brings good news for all, including—and especially—the oppressed, the brokenhearted, captives, prisoners, those who mourn and those who owe debts (The year of the Lord's favor was a time to forgive debts). God's work of justice and mercy that brings joy will be seen in all the nations (v. 11) and is for all, not just a select and privileged few. How do you see the wellbeing of others as important to your own wellbeing?

*Pray: God of justice, we give you thanks that your goodness and mercy is for us and for all the world through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Isaiah 61:11)*

**SERVICE**

There is a theme of joy in our readings this week. This joy includes God's promise to overcome pain, disappointment, and fear. Think of someone currently experiencing difficulties. How can you be the hands and voice of God's good news to that person this week?

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

Place the wise men further away from the nativity set for now. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope, the second one of peace, and the third one of joy. Pause for a moment to sit in silence and look upon the nativity set and think about the good news and joy the coming of Jesus brings us.

*Say this Bible verse: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)*

*Pray: Lord God, thank you for being with us in times of sadness and times of joy. Give us hope, peace and joy as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Amen.*