

## WELCOME!

We are glad to welcome you today as we gather together to worship God!

Please be sure you complete the salmon sheet inside your bulletin and turn it in to the collection plate at the time of communion.

This bulletin will assist you with participating in worship.

All parts spoken by the congregation are listed in  
**bold print and preceded by "C:"**

There are also instructions printed in *italics* that will indicate other helpful descriptions of the service.  
Please see a Greeter for Large Print bulletins and hymns.

Thank you for turning off your cell phones or putting them on "silent" during the service.



### **ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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*We are committed to **invite** and **welcome** all to Jesus Christ,  
to **equip** all with an active faith that works in real life,  
and together go into the world to **serve** in Jesus' name.*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE:** Behold, a Rose Breaks into Bloom by Johannes Brahms

*The prelude is by German composer Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), a master of symphonic and choral composition who wrote only a handful of organ works. The prelude is part of a collection of 11 preludes that was only published several years after his death.*

*Please stand*

## INVOCATION, CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

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

**C: Amen.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

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

*[Silence for reflection and self-examination]*

P: Most merciful God,

**C: 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.**

P: 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 all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**HYMN 269 "Once in Royal David's City"**

## APOSTOLIC GREETING

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C:** And also with you.

## KYRIE



*Pastor:* In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



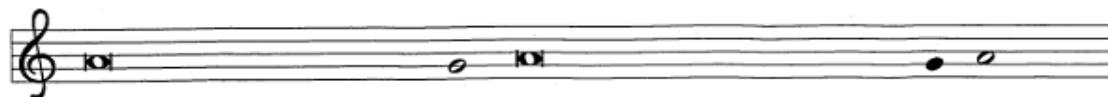
*All:* Lord, have mer - cy.



*Pastor:* For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



*All:* Lord, have mer - cy.



*Pastor:* For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



*All:* Lord, have mer - cy.



*Pastor:* For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. *All:* Lord have mer - cy.



*Pastor:* Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. *All:* A - men.

## THIS IS THE FEAST



S 149

*Pastor:* This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



*All:* 1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall

not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

### SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

P: The Holy Gospel according to the 11th chapter of Matthew.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

### HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for

another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **CELEBRATION RINGERS ANTHEM**

**SERMON**

Pastor Seth Jersild

**HYMN 272 "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"**

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**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.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

*Response:* P: ...Lord in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING



*Pastor:* The Lord be with you. *All:* And al - so with you.



*Pastor:* Lift up your hearts. *All:* We lift them to the Lord.



*Pastor:* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



*All:* It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy...

... we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:

## HOLY HOLY HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:



Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.

### HOLY COMMUNION

- ♦ *All baptized believers who trust that Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine are encouraged to partake in communion.*
- ♦ *Children and adults who do not receive the meal are invited forward for a blessing.*
- ♦ *If you cannot come forward but wish to receive the sacrament, please let an usher know and a server will bring the sacrament to you.*
- ♦ *If you require grape juice or wafers as a substitute for the wine and/or bread, please let the servers know.*

### BLESSING, PRAYER, and BENEDICTION

### HYMN 282 "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

### DISMISSAL

**P:** Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

**C:** Thanks be to God!

**POSTLUDE:** Once in Royal David's City

arr. John Innes



## The Lord Loves the Righteous

Find the 46 **bold** words from Psalm 146:1–8 (ESV)

P Q H E V I L R B H C P S O C  
R Q E S U O E T H G I R E E M  
E B A I I T V J U S T I C E A  
K O V A U H A L O V E S N Z N  
E Y E R O C I U K O T O I B O  
D Y N P O F O O D R N N R P I  
M S E B T Y B J A S N E P O T  
U D V S N A L P Y L A R Q S A  
O G O R E X E C U T E S U B V  
C B O W E D S O H S I R E P L  
Y P V D N V S E S U T I U T A  
J G N I S P E E K Y N K M H S  
K I L O R D D R V G A G W K R  
J B C F W E R F O I E A R T H  
L J P L E H T I A F G D P Y T

**Praise** the **LORD**, O my **soul**! I will praise the **LORD** as long as I **live**; I will **sing** praises to my **God** while I have my **being**. Put not your **trust** in **princes**, in a **son** of **man**, in whom there is no **salvation**. When his **breath** **departs**, he **returns** to the earth; on that very **day** his **plans** **perish**. **Blessed** is he whose **help** is the God of **Jacob**, whose **hope** is in the **LORD** his God, who made **heaven** and **earth**, the **sea**, and all that is in them, who **keeps** **faith** **forever**; who **executes** **justice** for the **oppressed**, who **gives** **food** to the **hungry**. The **LORD** **sets** the **prisoners** **free**; the **LORD** **opens** the **eyes** of the **blind**. The **LORD** **lifts** up those who are **bowed** **down**; the **LORD** **loves** the **righteous**.

# *Listening for the Promise*

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Third Sunday of Advent – December 11, 2022

*“And Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.’”*

*– Matthew 11:4-5 –*

These verses from Matthew 11 find John the baptizer in prison. His crime? He spoke the truth, albeit in a rather boisterous manner. Nevertheless, John spoke the truth about sin, repentance, and Jesus Christ. And now he’s imprisoned for it, and his days are numbered. John knew that Jesus is the Messiah and that he had come to the save the world. But now that he’s behind prison walls, maybe he’s second-guessing if it really is the Messiah that is among them. Maybe he’s just not sure. We call that “doubt.” Certainly we all have doubts about God and his presence in our lives. It’s apart of our human sinfulness. So John sends a couple of his followers to go find Jesus and ask him if he is the Messiah-- the one they have eagerly been waiting to arrive.

Last week we witnessed John the baptizer pointing us in the direction of Christ. This week, it appears the tables are turned a bit. Jesus encounters John’s followers, and Jesus sends them back to John with a message of what they themselves have seen and heard, what they have witnessed with their very own eyes and ears. Jesus responds with Scripture, verses from the prophet Isaiah (see Isaiah 35:5-6). And so John’s messengers return to him with words from Isaiah, sent from Jesus, the Messiah himself. John’s messengers serve as preachers for John! John needed to hear and be reminded that Jesus was indeed among them. “Go and tell,” Jesus urges. “Go and tell John what you have seen and what you have heard.”

We, too, are encouraged to “go and tell” others about the good news of Jesus Christ. We are called to serve as witnesses of God’s goodness and proclaim forgiveness of sin, life everlasting, and salvation with all who will hear and listen. That’s a big job for us, but it’s an important job. God uses us to bring his presence to others.

**Prayer:** Gracious God, use us as your instruments to bring the gospel to a world so desperately in need. We give you thanks for all who have and continue to bring your Word to all people. In Jesus’ name. Amen.