



Trinity Lutheran Church
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Third Sunday in Advent

Divine Service

December 17, 2023

Holy Communion is celebrated this Sunday at Trinity Lutheran Church in the glad confidence that our Lord, as His Words say, gives not only bread and wine, but also His true Body and Blood for us to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins. Our Lord invites to His table those who believe He is truly present, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive as He forgives us. Because Saint Paul reminds us that we can receive the Lord's Supper to our judgment, we are very careful to administer the Sacrament only to those who are properly prepared. When we receive Holy Communion, we publicly declare our agreement with the teachings of the church from which we receive it. *Therefore, if you are not yet a member of this congregation, a sister congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and if you have not previously spoken to the Pastor about Holy Communion, please refrain from coming forward to receive Communion until you have first spoken with the Pastor.* If you cannot receive the Lord's Supper but desire a blessing, please join us at the Communion rail and cross your arms over your chest to tell the pastor of your intent.

Opening Hymn

Hark the Glad Sound

LSB 349

Liturgy

p. 184

Introit

- P: Rejoice in the Lord | always;*
again I will | say, Rejoice.
Let your reasonableness be known to | everyone.
The Lord | is at hand;
- C: **LORD, you were favorable | to your land;***
you restored the fortunes of | Jacob.
You forgave the iniquity of your | people;*
you covered | all their sin.

**Will you not revive | us again,*
that your people may re- | jice in you?
Let me hear what God the | LORD will speak,*
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but
let them not turn back to | folly.**

**All: Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
 and to the Holy | Spirit;
 as it was in the be- | ginning,*
 is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

**P: Rejoice in the Lord | always;*
 again I will | say, Rejoice.
 Let your reasonableness be known to | everyone.
 The Lord | is at hand;**

**Kyrie
Collect**

p. 186

**P: Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to
 lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for
 You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God,
 now and forever.**

C: Amen

Old Testament

Isaiah 40:1-11 (ESV)

“Comfort, comfort my people,” says your God. “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.”

A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”

Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

A voice says, “Cry!” And I said, “What shall I cry?” “All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand

forever.”

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Gradual

**C: You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, | shine forth.*
 Stir up your might and come to | save us!
 Give ear, O Shepherd of | Israel,*
 you who lead Joseph | like a flock!**

Epistle

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 (ESV)

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

Alleluia

p. 190

Gospel

Matthew 11:2-11 (ESV)

Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” 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. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. What then did

you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, *Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.*”

“Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

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| Nicene Creed | | p. 191 |
| Hymn of the Day | <i>Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding</i> | LSB 345 |
| Sermon | <i>Is This the Messiah?</i> | Matthew 11:2-11 |
| Offertory | | p. 159 |
| Offering | | |
| Prayers | | |
| Lord’s Supper | | p. 194 |
| Distribution | <i>Prepare the Royal Highway</i> | LSB 343 |
| | <i>Soul, Adorn Thyself with Gladness</i> | LSB 636 |
| | <i>Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness</i> | LSB 849 |
| Canticle | <i>Nunc Dimittis</i> | p.199 |
| Prayer | | p. 201 |
| Benedicamus | | p. 201 |
| Benediction | | p. 202 |
| Hymn | <i>Once He Came in Blessing</i> | LSB 333 |

| Advent / Christmas / Epiphany | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Special Services | | | |
| Responsive Prayer at 12:00 p.m. | | | |
| Evening services begin at 7:00 p.m. | | | |
| <i>Date</i> | <i>Day Name</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Text</i> |
| 12/20/23 | Advent Midweek 4 | The Angel of Warning | Matthew 2:13-15 |
| 12/24/23 | Christmas Eve | The Angel of Joy | Luke 2:1-14 |
| 12/25/23 | Christmas Day | The Word Became Flesh | John 1:14-18 |
| 12/31/23 | New Year’s Eve | Shed for You | Luke 2:21 |
| 01/06/24 | Epiphany | Joint at St. Paul — Fulda | Pastor Williams preaching |