



THIRD SUNDAY OF

Advent

Sunday, December 15, 2024

Service Theme

A REAL CHRISTMAS RESULTS IN GREAT JOY

Multiple studies have proven that the holiday season exacerbates mental health issues. For some, the pressure to have “a perfect Christmas” can be overwhelming. For others, their loneliness is amplified. Such people need a real Christmas, one that results in great joy. But joy is not the same thing as happiness. It is infinitely better. Happiness is an emotion. Joyfulness is a condition. Happiness comes from your circumstances. Joyfulness comes from Christ assuring you of his abiding love and your glorious future. Therefore, happiness—“holiday cheer”—is fleeting. Joyfulness is enduring. The historic Christian Church gave Latin titles to each Sunday. They titled the Third Sunday in Advent “Gaudete,” which means “Rejoice!” As we reach the midway point of Advent, we ask Christ to empower us to do just that.

Invocation and Lighting of the Advent Candles

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen**

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

C: **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.**

M: We hear his call to see the light.

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

M: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

C: **Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.**

524 Rejoice, the Lord Is King

CW 524



1 Re - joi - ce, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King a - dore!
2 The Lord, our Sav - ior, reigns, the God of truth and love;
3 His king - dom can - not fail, he rules o'er earth and heav'n;
4 Re - joi - ce in glo - rious hope! Our Lord and judge shall come



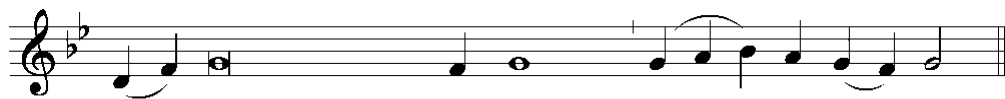
Re - joi - ce, give thanks and sing, and tri - umph ev - er - more:
when he had purged our stains, he took his seat a - bove:
the keys of death and hell are to our Je - sus giv'n:
and take his ser - vants up to their e - ter - nal home:

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

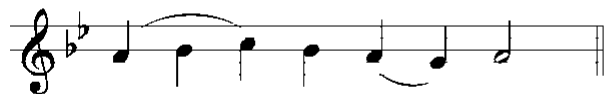
CW 174



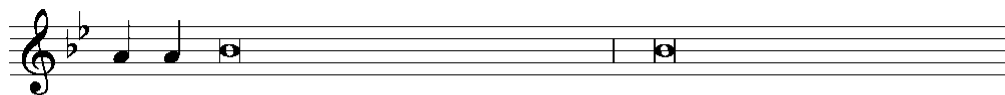
In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, com - fort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

Tune: Marty Haugen

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Glory to God in the Highest

CW 176



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his



peo - ple on earth. Lord God,



heav - en - ly King, al - migh - ty God and Fa - ther, we



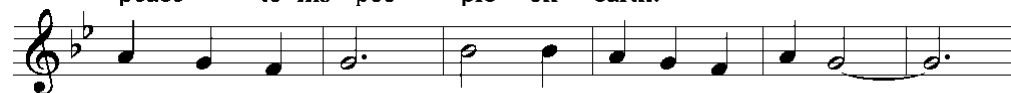
wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your



glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and



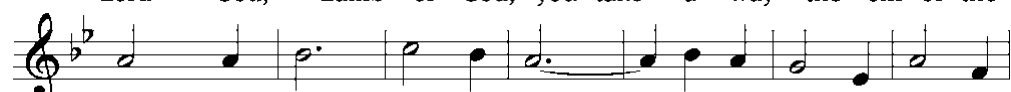
peace to his peo - ple on earth.



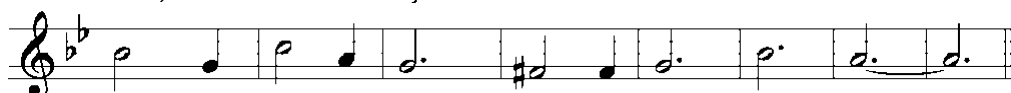
Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,



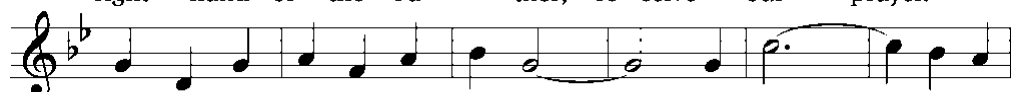
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



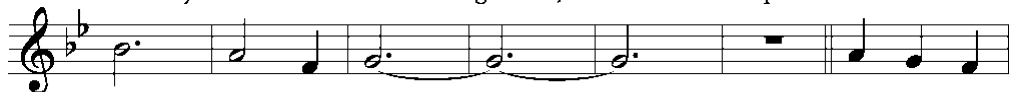
world; have mer - cy on us. You are seat - ed at the



right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.



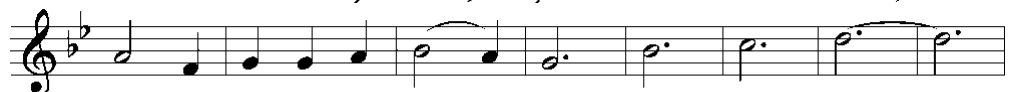
Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his



peo - ple on earth. For you a -



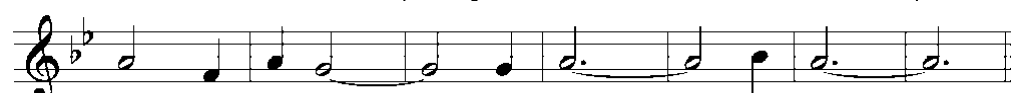
lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ,



with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the glo - ry of



God the Fa - ther. A - men. A - men.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his
peo - ple on earth.

Tune: Marty Haugen
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The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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

Zephaniah 3:14–17

We can rejoice, because the Lord has saved us and delights in us.

¹⁴Sing out, daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, you daughter of Jerusalem.
¹⁵The LORD has removed the judgment against you. He has turned back your enemy. Israel's king, the LORD, is in your midst! You no longer need to fear disaster. ¹⁶In that day Jerusalem will be told, "Do not be afraid, O Zion. Do not give up.

¹⁷The LORD your God is with you as a hero who will save you. He takes great delight in you. He will quiet you with his love. He will rejoice over you with singing.”

Thanks be to God.

130A Out of the Depths

Psalm 130A

Refrain

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD,
Lord, hear my voice.

Tone

Out / of the depths
I / cry to you, O LORD;
Lord, / hear my voice.
Listen closely as I / call on you for help.

LORD, if you kept / track of sins,
O / Lord, then who could stand?
But with you there is for- / givenness,
in order / that you may be feared. *Refrain*

I wait for the LORD, my / soul waits,
and in his / word I put my hope.
More than watchers wait for / morning
my / soul waits for the Lord.

Israel, put your hope / in the LORD,
for with the / LORD is faithful love;
with him is complete re- / demption.
He will redeem Israel from the / guilt of all their
sins.

**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 for- / ever. Amen. Refrain**

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Second Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

What is the reason for our enduring joy? The Lord is near to us.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always! I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:10

Alleluia, alleluia.

I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.

Alleluia.

Those who rejoice in the good news of salvation joyfully produce fruits of repentance.

⁷So John kept saying to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, “You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Therefore produce fruits in keeping with repentance! Do not even think of saying to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ because I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ⁹Even now the ax is ready to strike the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is going to be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰The crowds began to ask him, “What should we do then?”

¹¹He answered them, “Whoever has two shirts should share with the person who has none, and whoever has food should do the same.”

¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized. They said, “Teacher, what should we do?”

¹³To them he said, “Collect no more than what you were authorized to.”

¹⁴Soldiers were also asking him, “And what should we do?”

He told them, “Do not extort money from anyone by force or false accusation. Be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might be the Christ. ¹⁶John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But someone mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” ¹⁸Then with many other words, he appealed to them and was preaching good news to the people.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

324 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

CW 324



1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel - come you a - right?
2 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me.
3 Re - joice, then, you sad - heart - ed, who sit in deep - est gloom,
4 Sin's debt, that fear - ful bur - den, let not your souls dis - tress;
5 He comes to judge the na - tions, a ter - ror to his foes,



Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light.
Your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro - cured my lib - er - ty.
who mourn o'er joys de - part - ed and trem - ble at your doom.
your guilt the Lord will par - don and cov - er by his grace.
a light of con - so - la - tion and bless - ed hope to those



O Je - sus, let your Word be a lamp to light my way,
Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing that led you to em - brace
De - spair not; he is near you, he's stand - ing at the door
He comes, for you pro - cur - ing the peace of sin for - giv'n,
who love the Lord's ap - pear - ing. O glo - rious Sun, now come,



to show me how to please you, to guide me ev - 'ry day.
in love, all love ex - cel - ling, our lost and fall - en race!
who best can help and cheer you and bids you weep no more.
his chil - dren thus se - cur - ing e - ter - nal life in heav'n.
send forth your beams most cheer - ing, and guide us safe - ly home.

Text: tr. composite; Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, D. M. Luther's ... Geistliche Lieder, Berlin, 1653, abr.
Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598–1662, alt.
Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon – Psalm 130

My soul waits for the LORD:

- 1) With repentance
- 2) In joyful hope

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

**and is seated at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty.**

**From there he will come to judge the living and the
dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Offering

The Great “O” Antiphons of Advent

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Let us pray.

O Emmanuel, our King and our Lord, the anointed of the
nations and their Savior, come and save us, O Lord our
God.

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High,
pervading and permeating all creation, mightily order all
things; come and teach us the way of prudence.

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

O Adonai and ruler of the house of Israel, who appeared to
Moses in the burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai,
come with an outstretched arm and redeem us.

**O come, O come, great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the Law
in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

O Root of Jesse, standing as an ensign before the peoples,
before whom all kings are mute, to whom the nations will
do homage, come quickly to deliver us.

**O come, O Root of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can close; you close and no one can open; come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and the shadow of death.

**O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

O Dayspring, splendor of light everlasting, come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

**O come, O Dayspring from on high,
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, the cornerstone for uniting all people, come and save us all, whom you formed out of clay.

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind;
O bid our sad divisions cease,
and be yourself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
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.

366 O Rejoice, All Christians Loudly

CW 366



1 O re - joice, all Chris - tians, loud - ly, for our joy has
2 See, my soul, your Sav - ior choos - es pov - er - ty and
3 Lord, how shall I thank you right - ly? I am saved e -
4 Je - sus, guard and guide your mem - bers, fill them with your



now be - gun; won - drous things our God has done.
weak - ness, too; in such love he comes to you.
ter - nal - ly by your life and death for me.
bound - less grace, hear their prayers in ev - 'ry place.



Tell a - broad his good - ness proud - ly, who our race has
Nei - ther crib nor cross re - fus - es, all he suf - fers
Let me not for - get it light - ly, but with all my
Fan - to life faith's glow - ing em - bers; grant all Chris - tians



hon - ored thus, that he has be - friend - ed us.
for your good to re - deem you by his blood.
heart be - lieve that from you I shall re - ceive
far and near ho - ly peace, a glad new year.

Refrain



Joy, O joy, be - yond all glad - ness! Christ has done a -



way with sad - ness! Hence, all sor - row and re - pin - ing,



for the Sun of grace is shin - ing!

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Christian Keimann, 1607–1662

Tune: Andreas Hammerschmidt, 1611–1675, alt.

Text and tune: Public domain



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Announcements

Anyone wishing to help beautify the Altar for Christmas, please drop off the plant(s) of your choice (traditionally poinsettias) to the church by the end of worship on Sunday, December 22nd. You are welcomed to take your plants home after the Christmas Eve/Day Worship service or, if you wish, you may leave them at church to continue to beautify the altar for upcoming worship services.

Church Cleaners

December 22 – Timothy // December 29 – Mark

Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve 7 PM

Christmas Day 11 AM

DIVINE WORD'S TWO-WEEK CALENDAR

Su (15) 9:00 am Sunday School / Bible Class

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Fellowship

12:00 pm Voters' Meeting

We (18) 4:00 pm Communicating Christ (BIC)

Th (19) 6:00 pm Illumine (at St. Paul's)

6:30 pm Youth Confirmation (W)

Fr (20) 4:30 pm Confirmation (D)

Su (22) 9:00 am Sunday School / Bible Class

10:30 am Worship with Communion

11:30 am Fellowship

Tu (24) 2:00 pm Christmas Eve in Poltimore

7:00 pm Christmas Eve at Divine Word

We (25) 11:00 am Christmas Day at Divine Word

Su (29) 10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Fellowship

Acknowledgments

Setting Two from Christian Worship

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