



THIRD SUNDAY OF

Advent

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Service Theme

IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF THE MESSIAH

“Messiah” is the same word as “Christ” or “Anointed One.” He is someone who has been anticipated for a long time. Now we look at a time when his arrival is imminent! 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. We rejoice because God fulfills all his promises in Jesus.

Invocation and Lighting of the Advent Candles

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

Amen.

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.

315 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

CW 315



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, who has tru - ly
2 What the fa - thers most de - sired, what the proph - ets'
3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
4 Sav - ior, hear my wel - come cry— loud ho - san - nas



kept his word and at last to us did send
heart in - spired, what they longed for man - y a year
Ja - cob's Lord— him of two - fold race be - hold—
lift - ed high! King of glo - ry, en - ter in;



Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
cleanse my soul of ev - 'ry sin.

- 5 Crush for me the serpent's head
that, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to you in faith,
safely kept through life and death,
- 6 And, when you shall come again
as a glorious king to reign,
I with joy may see your face,
freely ransomed by your grace.

Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–1659, abr.; (sts. 1–3, 5–6): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; (st. 4): tr. Christian Worship, 2021
Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, Wittenberg, 1524, ed. Johann Walter
Text (st. 4): © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 719723 Text (sts. 1–3, 5–6) and tune: Public domain

The Service

Setting Three (page 188)

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 189

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.

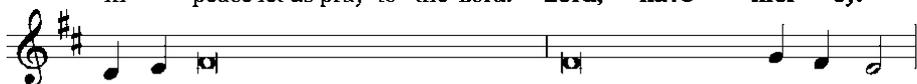
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

CW 190



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



For the peace from above and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



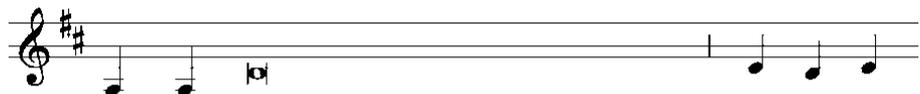
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the un - it - y of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor - ship and



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



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



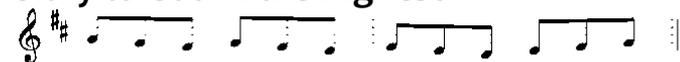
A - men. A - men.

Tune: William Gokelman; David Kauffman

Tune: © 2021 GFTSMUSIC Publishing Company, Inc., admin. Music Services. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 719723

Glory to God in the Highest

CW 191



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



God, and peace to his peo - ple on earth,



and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



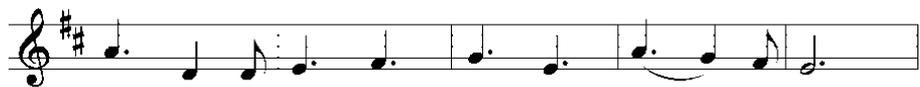
Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and



Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we



praise you for your glo - ry. 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. 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.
Glo - ry to God in the high - est, glo - ry to
God, and peace to his peo - ple on earth,
and peace to his peo - ple on earth.

Tune: William Gokelman; David Kauffman

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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.

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

Isaiah tells us that the coming of the Messiah would change everything.

¹The wilderness and the desert will be glad.
The wasteland of the Arabah will rejoice and blossom like a crocus.

²It will bloom lavishly,
and there will be great joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it.
It will be excellent like Carmel and Sharon.
They will see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands,
and make the shaky knees steady.

⁴Tell those who have a fearful heart:

Be strong.

Do not be afraid.

Look! Your God will come with vengeance.

With God's own retribution, he will come and save you.

⁵Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,
and the ears of the deaf will be unplugged.

⁶The crippled will leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy.
Waters will flow in the wilderness,
and streams in the wasteland.

⁷The burning sand will become a pool,
and in the thirsty ground there will be springs of water.
There will be grass, reeds, and rushes where the haunts
of jackals once lay.

⁸A highway will be there,
a road that will be called the holy way.
The impure will not walk there.
It will be reserved for those who walk in that holy way.
Wicked fools will not wander onto it.

⁹No lion will be there,
 nor will any ferocious animal go up on it.
 They will not be found there,
 but only the redeemed will walk there.
¹⁰Then those ransomed by the LORD will return.
 They will enter Zion with a joyful shout,
 and everlasting joy will crown their heads.
 Happiness and joy will overtake them,
 and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

146A I Will Praise the Lord All My Life

Psalm 146A

Refrain

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
 the LORD loves the righteous.

Tone

I will praise the LORD / all my life;
 I will sing praise to my God as long / as I live.
 Do not put your trust in / princes,
 in human beings, who / cannot save.
 Blessed are those whose help is the God of / Jacob,
 whose hope is in the / LORD their God. *Refrain*
 He upholds the cause of / the oppressed
 and gives food to the / hungry.

The LORD sets / pris'ners free,
the LORD gives sight / to the blind.
The LORD reigns for- / ever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations. / Praise the LORD.

**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. Refrain**

Tune: Henry V. Gerike. Setting: Henry V. Gerike. Music: © 2002 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: License no. 130377859

Second Reading

James 5:7–11

James points to Job as an example of perseverance in the face of suffering.

⁷Therefore, brothers, be patient until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the valuable harvest from the ground, patiently waiting for it, until it receives the early and late rain. ⁸You be patient too. Strengthen your hearts because the coming of the Lord is near.

⁹Do not complain about one another, brothers, so that you will not be judged. Look! The Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰Brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord as an example of suffering with patient endurance. ¹¹See, we consider those who endured to be blessed. You have heard of the patient endurance of Job and have seen what the Lord did in the end, because the Lord is especially compassionate and merciful.

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!

John's disciples wanted to verify that Jesus was the Messiah.

²While John was in prison, he heard about the things Christ was doing. He sent two of his disciples ³to ask him, “Are you the Coming One or should we wait for someone else?”

⁴Jesus answered them, “Go, report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor. ⁶Blessed is the one who does not take offense at me.”

⁷As these two were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the crowds about John. “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? No, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹So what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you! And he is much more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, ‘Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ ¹¹Amen I tell you: Among those born of women there has not appeared anyone greater than John the Baptist. Yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

313 Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

CW 313



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held; the gates of brass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751, abr., alt. Tune: Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820, alt. Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Psalm 130

My soul waits for the LORD

- 1) He came to redeem me
- 2) He comes to deliver me

¹Out of the depths I have called to you, O LORD.

²Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive to the sound of my cry for mercy.

³If you, LORD, kept a record of guilt,
 O Lord, who could stand?

⁴But with you there is pardon,
 so you are feared.

⁵I wait for the LORD. My soul waits,
 and in his word I have put my hope.

⁶My soul waits for the Lord
 more than watchmen wait for the morning,
 more than watchmen wait for the morning.

⁷Israel, wait confidently for the LORD,
 because with the LORD there is mercy.
 With him there is abundant redemption.

⁸So he himself will redeem Israel from all its guilt.

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.**

Prayer of the Church

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.

Give your Word power as it works in our hearts and minds. Clear away our confusion, and demolish our doubts. Send your Spirit to strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

Take away our love of sinning, and restore us each day by your grace.

The signs of the times warn us that the end of time is near. Protect us from scoffers who sneer at your truth. Spare us and Christians around the world from all forms of hate and persecution.

Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.

Instill in the hearts of our children a desire to follow you as they prepare for future days. Help them distinguish between what is passing and what is eternal, between instant thrills and lasting joy. Encourage more young people to prepare for service in the public ministry of the gospel.

Mold us and move us to be good examples for our youth.

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. [Especially bless . . .] Pour out your compassion on the grieving, and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever.

Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Offering

322 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

CW 322



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of
3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a
4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in



set thy peo - ple free; from our fears and
all the earth thou art, dear de - sire of
child and yet a king, born to reign in
all our hearts a - lone; by thine all - suf -



sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.
ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt. Tune: Southern Harmony, New Haven, 1835, ed. William Walker. Text and tune: Public domain

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 T give you peace.

Amen.

358 Of the Father's Love Begotten

CW 358 sts. 1-3, 5



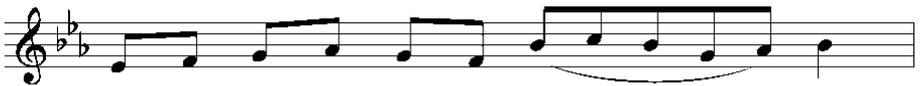
1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed when the vir - gin,
 3 This is he whom seers and sa - ges sang of old with
 5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
 full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
 one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets
 Ghost, to thee hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he,
 bore the Sav - ior of our race,
 prom - ised in their faith - ful word,
 and un - end - ing prais - es be,



of the things that are, that have been,
 and the babe, the world's Re - deem - er,
 Now he shines, the long - ex - pect - ed;
 hon - or, glo - ry, and do - min - ion



and that fu - ture years shall see ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 first re - vealed his sa - cred face ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 let cre - a - tion praise its Lord ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry ev - er - more and ev - er - more.

Text: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348-c. 413, abr.; (sts. 1-3): tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.; (st. 5): tr. Henry W. Baker, 1821-1877, alt. Tune: plainsong, 13th cent. Text and tune: Public domain

Announcements

Church Cleaners

December 21 – Thomas / December 28 – John

Christmas Flowers

Anyone wishing to help beautify the Altar for Christmas Eve and Day services, please drop off the plant(s) of your choice (traditionally poinsettias) to the church by Sunday, December 21st. You are welcomed to take your plants home after the Christmas Eve and Day worship services or, if you wish, you may leave them at church to continue to beautify the altar for upcoming worship services.

New Library Book

Our very own Maddy Lindke has written a book and it is now available in the church library. Check out her book written to help children feel comfortable and participate in a church service. It provides information on all the parts of the service and then gives acceptable behavior for how to act. This is a wonderful resource for all parents and children. If you are interested in your own copy, you can purchase one through Amazon.ca or talk to Cyndi Photenhauer.

Acknowledgments

Setting Three from Christian Worship

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DIVINE WORD'S TWO-WEEK CALENDAR

- Su (14) 9:00 am Sunday School / Bible Study**
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Coffee hour
11:45 pm Voter's Meeting
- Tu (16) 7:00 pm Elders Meeting
- We (17) 9:30 am Communicating Christ (Adult)
5:30 pm Youth Confirmation (W)
- Su (21) 9:00 am Sunday School / Bible Study**
10:30 am Worship with Communion
11:45 am Coffee hour
3:00 pm Worship in Poltimore
4:00 pm Bible Class (Poltimore)
- We (24) 10:30 am Lessons and Carols @ Divine Word
3:00 pm Lessons and Carols in Poltimore
7:00 pm Lessons and Carols @ Divine Word
- Th (25) 11:00 am Christmas Day Service
- Su (28) 10:30 am Worship**
11:30 am Coffee hour



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