

Third Sunday of Advent  
11 December 2022



Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# Service of Holy Communion

## *Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Setting 3*

*The liturgy is in the front of the ELW with numbers at the bottom of the pages.  
The hymns begin in the middle of the ELW with numbers at the top of the pages.*

### **Prelude / Ringing of the Bell**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

## *Third Sunday of Advent*

### *~ Hope for Those Who Are Watching ~*

P: Advent is a time to awaken our spiritual senses.

**C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!**

P: Grant us vision to behold your glory.

**C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!**

P: Quiet us so we may hear your still, soft voice.

**C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!**

P: Make us vessels of your mercy, compassion, and grace..

**C: We stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord, repeat them in our day!**

P: For all of us eagerly watching for your glory in our midst:

**C: Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.**

### *Candle Lighting*

This morning we light three candles. The **first candle** reminds us of those who find themselves in a season of waiting, resting in hopeful anticipation for God to act. The **second candle** is for anyone feeling weakened and wearied by the circumstances of life. We echo the cry of scripture to renew their strength and increase their power. The **third candle** awakens our spiritual senses, challenging us to embrace the glory of God, as we await our Savior's promised coming.

**Acclamation:** Hymn #715 (Refrain)

♪ **Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.**

**Shine through the darkness.**

**Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.**

## **Confession and Forgiveness** (pages 94-96)

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 one another.

*(There is a time of silence for reflection.)*

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 #267 “Joy to the World”**

### **Greeting** (page 138)

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** (pages 138-139)

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

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

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: 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.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and  
praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**C: Amen.**

♩ **This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,  
whose blood set us free to be people of God.  
This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,  
and honor, blessing, and glory are his.  
This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Sing with all the people of God  
and join in the hymn of all creation.  
Blessing, honor, glory and might  
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.  
This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**For the Lamb who was slain  
has begun his reign. Alleluia.  
This is the feast of victory for our God.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

### **Prayer of the Day**

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray. *concluding:* **C: Amen**



## **Readings**

L: The Word of the Lord.    C: **Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Acclamation**

♩ **Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

## **Gospel**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P: The Gospel of the Lord.    C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Youth Sermon** – Pastor Holloway-Nilsen

**Sermon** – Pastor Holloway-Nilsen

**Hymn #264 “Prepare the Royal Highway”**

**Confession of Faith: Nicene Creed**

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven**

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

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### **Prayers of Intercession**

P: As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

*(Each petition ends: P: God, in your mercy, C: hear our prayer.)*

P: God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.

**C: Amen.**

### **Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

### **Offering**

#### **Offertory Prayer**

P: Holy God, gracious and merciful...our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

♫ **Great Thanksgiving** (page 144)

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

P: It is indeed right....and join their unending hymn:

♫ **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna, Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

### **Words of Institution**

#### **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.**

#### ***Holy Communion is celebrated today.***

*All who are baptized into Christ Jesus are invited to receive Holy Communion  
Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.*

♫ **Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace.**

### **Hymn #487 "What Feast of Love"**

#### **Post Communion Blessing**

**P:** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C: Amen**



## **Post-Communion Hymn (Hymn 286)**

♪ **Your little ones, dear Lord, are we,  
and come your lowly bed to see;  
enlighten ev'ry soul and mind,  
that we the way to you may find.**

## **Post Communion Prayer**

P: Let us pray.

P: We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **Blessing**

P: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **Hymn #251 “My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness”**

## **Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Share the good news. **C: Thanks be to God!**

## **Ring of the Bell / Postlude**

**Pastor:** Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen

**Organist:** Jason Boussetot or Linda Whitman

**Acolyte:** Macailah Jacobsen

**Lector:** Mark Olson

**Communion Assistant:** Neil Holmquist

**Usher:** Dan Burke

**Cleaners:** Brian Boussetot & Mary Timmerman

**Contact Information:**

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**This Week At A Glance**

Wednesday	5:45 pm	Christmas program practice at Our Savior's
	6:00 pm	Savior's
	7:00 pm	Midweek Advent meal at Our Savior's
	7:30 pm	Midweek Advent service at Our Savior's
		God Squad Christmas Party at Our Savior's
Saturday	9:30 am	Christmas program practice at Faith
Sunday	8:00 am	Worship service at Our Savior's
	9:25 am	Sunday School at Faith
	10:30 am	Children's Christmas Program at Faith

**Those to keep in prayer** Rob Travaille, Sam Huitt, Cathy Goddard, Ruth Braet, Lucy Lee Petersen, Velma Jensen, Megan Mineck Wentland, Ryan Dick, Tim Burke, Barb Johnson; the homebound: Norman Boussetot, Carol Christensen, Shirley Ferguson, Ron Gasper,

Myrna Kay Petersen, Rusty Porth, Betty Schau, Bus Seastrand, and Joan Shelton; and those serving in the military.

**God Squad Christmas Party** will be held **December 14<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30pm at Our Savior's Church for Junior High and High School youth, 'Tis the Season to celebrate Christmas, join us for holiday fun!!!

**Annual reports** from the following are due in the church office by **Monday, December 19, 2022:** Pastor, Council Presidents, and all committees (Education, Christian Outreach, Worship, Property and Management, Our Savior's Cemetery, and God Squad)

**Financial reports, budgets, and audit reports** are due in the church office by **Monday, January 16, 2023.**

## **Advent Schedule**

Join the confirmation students and Pastor each Wednesday for our mid-week Advent service. A meal will be served at 6:00 pm. The Advent service will start at 7:00 pm

Dec. 14 – Our Savior’s

Dec. 21 – Our Savior’s

The **Sunday School Christmas Program** will be held on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, at 10:30 am at Faith.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight** service at Our Savior’s at 9:00 pm.

**Christmas Day** at Faith at 9:00 am. No service at Our Savior’s.

On **Sunday, January 01, 2023**, there will be one worship service at Faith at 9:00 am. Sunday School will not be held that day.

## **Special Collection**

During the weeks of Advent, the parish will be collecting winter wear. Please bring new (or very gently used) winter coats, hats, gloves, and mittens to Faith and Our Savior’s. The items will be given to the Carroll Assistance Center in Wheatland for distribution to those who need something warm to wear this winter.

# Joy as the Antidote to Despair

*by Teri McDowell Ott*

In the introduction to the collection *Joy: 100 Poems*, Christian Wiman explains that he's chosen almost entirely modern poets, both for diversity of voice and experience, and to "explore what joy means for poets at this moment in history." At this moment in history, the weight of our world's news burdens us with despair over the violence of war, rising hate crimes, devastating natural disasters and entrenched political divides. Wiman writes that "joy is the only inoculation against the despair to which any sane person is prone, the only antidote to the nihilism that wafts through our intellectual atmosphere like sarin gas." Despair is a constant. Joy must be sought.

On this third Sunday of Advent, traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday, we are called to "rejoice" even though we may not feel particularly joyful. Many of us may feel burdened with year-end deadlines to meet, holiday parties to plan and attend, cards to send, presents to buy and wrap. Those who live alone, isolated from such Christmas chaos, might feel the poignance of their loneliness. Those who make their way to a pew this Sunday are more than likely in need of an "inoculation of joy" as a way to resist despair.

I've often counseled people who are going through difficult times to intentionally seek joy. Observe the majesty of a sunset. Listen to giggling children. Receive a friend's hug. Offer a random act of kindness. Seek joy, I've advised, not to demean or downplay their anguish, but to help them find their way through it. Moments of joy can serve as stepping stones through the desert of despair.

The text from Isaiah describes the Israelites' return after exile, through the wilderness to the promised land. Unlike their exodus journey, this pilgrimage is marked with rejoicing; the desert crocus blossoms beneath their feet, waters and streams quench the thirsty land, the burning sands are cooled as the people sing their way home, praising God.



The trials of the people in Isaiah 35:1-10 are not over. The enemies that surround them are real and powerful. But the message of seeking joy during suffering is meaningful no matter where we are on our journey.

At this point in a lectionary reflection or the closing of a sermon, I'd typically turn the message somewhere positive or uplifting. But real life is no fairy tale, and joy is all the more precious when it is found and embraced amidst despair.

Wiman's collection includes the Russian poet Osip Mandelstam, who felt a moral responsibility to write for his people during the Russian Revolution of the 1900s. When the government demanded poets write patriotic poems to inspire obedience among the working class, Mandelstam resisted. He instead wrote poetry that evoked a violent, upending kind of joy; the kind of joy that can save you when life is insufferable.

Even after he was arrested for writing a poem mocking Stalin, and exiled to a Russian corrective-labor camp, Mandelstam continued to compose poetry. His health declined. He was starving. The last time he was seen alive, he was scavenging for food out of a garbage dump. Mandelstam knew full well that he was about to die. Yet still, he resisted being consumed by his despair. According to Wiman, one of the last poems he wrote before his death was, "And I Was Alive:"

And I was alive in the blizzard of the blossoming pear...  
It was all leaflife and starshower, unerring...  
And it was all aimed at me.