



St. John's Lutheran Church

Rooted and Growing: In Christ. In Community.



The Third Sunday in Advent

December 12 & 13, 2020

To Those Who Overcome: Jesus Promises Righteousness.

Prelude

Opening Hymn

Please stand to sing the final stanza

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

Christian Worship 19

C: O Lord, how shall I meet you,
How welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you,
My hope, my heart's delight!
O Jesus, let your Word be
A lamp to light my way,
To show me how to please you,
To guide me ev'ry day.

See, Zion casts before you
Green boughs and fairest palms,
And I, too, will adore you
With joyous songs and psalms.
My heart shall bloom forever
For you with praises new
And from your name shall never
Withhold the honor due.

ADVENT GATHERING RITE

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

C: Amen.

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

(sung) **I lay in fetters, groaning,
You come to set me free;
I stood, my shame bemoaning,
You come to honor me;
A glory you do give me,
A treasure safe on high,
That will not fail or leave me
As earthly riches fly.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 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 Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

(sung) **Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
Let not your souls distress;
Your guilt the Lord will pardon
And cover by his grace.
He comes, for you procuring
The peace of sin forgiv'n,
His children thus securing
A heritage in heav'n.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

M: We light three Advent candles and remember Jesus, the Light of the world. He came to defeat the prince of darkness in answer to his people's prayers.

C: **We remember Jesus, the One proclaimed by John as 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, and dwell among us.

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

The Advent candles are lit during the sung response.

(sung) What though the foes be raging,
Heed not their craft and spite;
Your Lord, the battle waging,
Will scatter all their might.
He comes, a King most glorious,
And all his earthly foes
In vain his course victorious
Endeavor to oppose.

Prayer of the Day

M: 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.

C: Amen.

(sung) Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,
Who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed
And tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you,
He's standing at the door
Who best can help and cheer you
And bids you weep no more.

Be seated

THE WORD

First Lesson

Malachi 4:1-6

Those who despise the Savior's coming will be humbled, but those who revere his name will be exalted.

“Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things,” says the LORD Almighty.

“Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 71 (see pg. 12)

God will not forsake those who anticipate his coming.

Second Lesson

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Those who anticipate the Savior's coming are joyful and at peace with God.

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

Verse of the Day

M: Alleluia, alleluia. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia.

Please stand

Gospel

John 1:6-8, 19-28

John points to the light – the Messiah – but those around him do not listen.

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ."

They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.' "

Now some Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

"I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ.

Be seated

Anthem

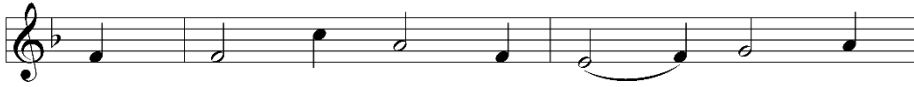
Savior of the Nations, Come

arranged by Larry Sue

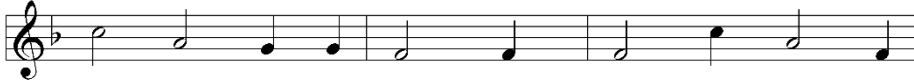
Savior of the nations, come; virgin's Son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.

Wondrous birth, O wondrous Child of the virgin undefiled,
Though by all the world disowned, yet to be in heav'n enthroned!

Praise to God the Father sing, praise to God the Son, our King
Praise to God the Spirit be ever and eternally.



1 A - rise, O Chris - tian peo - ple! Pre -
 2 Pre - pare the way be - fore him; Pre -
 3 The hum - ble heart and low - ly God
 4 Pre - pare my heart, Lord Je - sus; Turn



pare your - selves to - day. Pre - pare to greet the
 pare for him the best. Cast out what would of -
 rais - es up on high; Be - neath his feet in -
 not from me a - side, And help me to re -



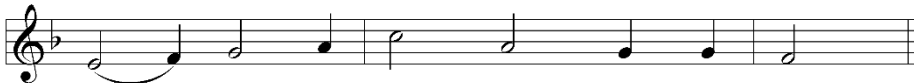
Sav - ior, Who takes your sins a - way. To
 fend him, This great, this heav'n - ly guest. Make
 ter - ror The haugh - ty soul shall lie. The
 ceive you This bless - ed Ad - vent - tide. From



us by grace a - lone The truth and
 straight, make plain the way: The low - ly
 heart sin - cere and right, That heeds God's
 stall and man - ger low Come now to



light were giv - en; The prom - ised Lord from
 val - leys rais - ing, The heights of pride a -
 in - vi - ta - tion And makes true prep - a -
 dwell with - in me; I'll sing your prais - es



heav - en To all the world is shown.
 bas - ing, His path all e - ven lay.
 ra - tion— It is the Lord's de - light.
 glad - ly And forth your glo - ry show.

Letters to the Seven Churches: Sardis

“To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Please stand

Apostles' Creed

C: 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.

Be seated

Offering

The members of St. John's have joined together to do the Lord's work in our community and around the world, and our offerings are a joyful response of our faith. To submit your offering electronically, scan the QR code or visit www.sjtosa.org/giving. If you are a visitor today, you are welcome but not obligated to give an offering.



Please stand

Prayer of the Church

M: O Jesus, Word of God made flesh, through whom the world was formed and by whose Word all things are upheld, we stand in humble awe and reverence at the great mystery of your incarnation.

C: **Our reason cannot comprehend how you, the Almighty Son of God, could be born of a woman and live here as our brother.**

M: But what we cannot understand with our minds, you have graciously enabled our hearts to accept by faith.

C: **We praise and thank you that through the Holy Spirit, you have directed our hearts to bow in faith before you.**

M: Through your Spirit, keep us in true repentance, that we may ever confess our sins and unworthiness and continually trust the sacrifice you made on the cross to save us.

C: **You are indeed our God who was made flesh; our sin-bearer and our substitute; our hope, our joy, and our peace.**

M: O Savior of the world, send the Holy Spirit to create faith through the gospel that all may find in you forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

C: **Fill us with your Holy Spirit and move us to share this saving message with those around us.**

Special prayers and intercessions may follow

M: As we anticipate your coming to the manger in Bethlehem, remind us also of your daily coming to us in Word and Sacrament and of your glorious coming on the last day.

C: **Our hearts long for that day when we will see you face to face. Come quickly, Lord Jesus! Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

C: 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.

Be seated

Hymn

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

Christian Worship 6



1 Come, O long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, Born to set your peo - ple free;
2 Born your peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child and yet a king,



From our sins and fears re - lease us By your death on Cal - va - ry.
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now your gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's Strength and Con - so - la - tion, Hope to all the earth im - part,
By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear De - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
By your all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to your glo - rious throne.

Please stand

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

M: 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.

C: Amen.

Be seated

Closing Hymn

See in Yonder Manger Low

Christian Worship 58



1 See in yon-der man-ger low, Born for us on earth be-low,
2 Lo, with-in a sta-ble lies He who built the star-ry skies,
3 Sa-cred In-fant, all di-vine, What a ten-der love was thine,
4 Teach, oh, teach us, ho-ly Child, By thy face so meek and mild,



See— the gen-tle Lamb ap-pears, Prom-ised from e-ter-nal years.
He who, throned in height sub-lime, Sits a-mid the cher-u-bim.
Thus to come from high-est bliss Down to such a world as this.
Teach us to re-sem-ble thee In thy sweet hu-mil-i-ty.

Refrain



Hail the ev-er bless-ed morn; Hail re-demp-tion's hap-py dawn;



Sing through all Je-ru-sa-lem, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"

Announcements

WELS Connection

Academia Cristo

Postlude

Psalm 71

Refrain



Bless-ed are they who hope, who hope in the Lord.

Psalm tone



In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame.

Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness;
turn your ear to me and save me.

Be my rock of refuge to which I can always go;
for you are my rock and my fortress.

Refrain

Since my youth, O God, you have taught me,
and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.

Even when I am old and gray,
do not forsake me, O God,

till I declare your power to the next generation,
your might to all who are to come.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

Serving at Worship

Minister

Pastor Kyle Bitter

Musicians

Eric Sipe, organ (Saturday)
Mandy Treder, organ (Sunday)
Megan Bauer, viola
Becky Rehborg, clarinet
Rachel Wendland, violin

Worship Notes

- The altar flowers are placed by Dan and Sue Eick in celebration of the marriage of their son, Joseph Eick, to Anne Reinhardt on Saturday, December 12.

In Our Prayers

- Everly Marie Johnston, daughter of Dan Johnston and Megan Johnston (née Schaeuble), who will be baptized in a private ceremony following our 10:30 a.m. service today.

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Parents' Preview for December 20

The Parents' Preview highlights an aspect of next week's service: a liturgical song, a Psalm refrain, or a hymn stanza. Our hope and prayer is that parents will teach this portion of the service to their children at home during the week so that children can participate more fully in the worship service.

Psalm 89 Refrain

Refrain

At the works of your hands, O Lord, I
lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

Readings for the Week of Advent 3

M	Matthew 11:11-15	Luke 1:5-25
T	Matthew 3:1-11	Luke 1:57-70
W	Luke 3:10-20	John 5:31-36
R	John 1:6-9, 15, 16	Hosea 14:5-9
F	John 1:29-34	2 Timothy 4:5-8
S	Luke 7:29-35	Isaiah 62

St. John's Holiday Worship Schedule

Wednesday, December 16	Midweek Advent Worship 1:00 (broadcast online) & 6:45 p.m.
Saturday, December 19	Worship 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, December 20	Worship 8:00 (broadcast online) & 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday, December 23	Children's Christmas Service 1:00 p.m. (broadcast online only, no in-person service)
Thursday, December 24	Service of Lessons & Carols 3:00 (broadcast online), 4:30, 6:00 & 7:30 p.m.
Friday, December 25	Christmas Day Festival Worship 8:30 (broadcast online), 9:45 & 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, December 26	No evening worship
Sunday, December 27	Worship 8:00 (broadcast online) & 10:30 a.m.
Thursday, December 31	New Year's Eve Worship 5:30 (broadcast online) & 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 2	No evening worship
Sunday, January 3	Worship 8:00 (broadcast online) & 10:30 a.m.

The Mission of our Church

As God's people gathered together at St. John's, we live to declare the praises of our Savior God who called us out of the darkness of sin into the light of his grace.

As 21st century disciples of Jesus, we reflect the light of God's love by:



Making worship of our Savior the top priority in our lives



Growing in our faith through daily contact with God's Word



Fostering Christian friendships for mutual encouragement and support



Using our unique gifts to glorify God and serve God's people



Sharing the good news of God's forgiving love with others

Worship Services

Saturdays at 5:30 p.m.

Sundays at 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Worship in Chinese

Saturdays at 7:00 p.m.

Pastors

*Pastor Joel Leyrer
joel.leyrer@sjtosa.org*

*Pastor Eric Schroeder
eric.schroeder@sjtosa.org*

*Pastor Kyle Bitter
kyle.bitter@sjtosa.org*

Chinese Outreach Pastor

*Pastor Joshua Yu
joshua.yu@sjtosa.org*

School Principal

*Mr. Dan Markgraf
dan.markgraf@sjtosa.org*

Church Office

*7809 Harwood Ave
Wauwatosa, WI 53213
(414) 258-7831
church@sjtosa.org*

School Office

*1278 Dewey Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53213
(414) 258-4214
school@sjtosa.org*

sjtosa.org