

Sunday, December 13, 2020
Third Sunday of Advent
Year B - Service of the Word



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Wilmington
DE
Leader Pages

GATHERING

Prelude - Cantor

Welcome & Advent Wreath Lighting

Gathering Song - *Unexpected and Mysterious*

Prayer of the Day - Assistant Minister

Let us Pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God,
and open our ears to the words of your prophets,
that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your
light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Advent Hymn - ELW 252



1 Each win - ter as the year grows old - er, we each grow old - er,
 2 When race and class cry out for trea - son, when si - rens call for
 3 Yet I be - lieve be - yond be - liev - ing that life can spring from
 4 So e - ven as the sun is turn - ing to jour - ney to the
 5 O Child of ec - sta - sy and sor - rows, O Prince of peace and



too. The chill sets in a lit - tle cold - er; the
 war, they o - ver - shout the voice of rea - son and
 death, that growth can flow - er from our griev - ing, that
 north, the liv - ing flame, in se - cret burn - ing, can
 pain, bright - en to - day's world by to - mor - row's, re -



ver - i - ties we knew seem shak - en and un - true.
 scream till we ig - nore all we held dear be - fore.
 we can catch our breath and turn trans - fixed by faith.
 kin - dle on the earth and bring God's love to birth.
 new our lives a - gain; Lord Je - sus, come and reign!

WORD

First Reading (Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11) - Lector

A reading from Isaiah.

1 The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
4 They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

8 For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge

that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.
10I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
11For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading (1 Thessalonians 5:16-24) - Lector

A reading from First Thessalonians.

16Rejoice always, 17pray without ceasing, 18give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
19Do not quench the Spirit. 20Do not despise the words of prophets, 21but test everything; hold fast to what is good;
22abstain from every form of evil.

23May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Word of God, Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation - Cantor

Gospel (John 1:6-8; 19-28) - Preacher

The Holy Gospel According to John.

Glory to you O Lord.

6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

19This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” 20He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” 21And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” 22Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” 23He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ”

as the prophet Isaiah said.

24Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. 25They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” 26John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, 27the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” 28This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon - Pastor Jason

Hymn of the Day - ELW 264

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain
 Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Creed - Lector

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed:

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 - Lector

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Offering Song - Cantor

Dialogue and Preface - Presiding Minister

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy God, the Beginning and the Ending, our Hope as we wait,
we praise you for joining us to your people of old.

We bless you for your prophets who call us to righteousness and
promise a new earth with peace for all.

For the Word of your covenant,
we thank you, O God.

We thank you, O God.

We praise you for the coming of Jesus our Lord,
who lifts up the lowly, heals the suffering world,
and proclaims your way of mercy and truth.

For your Word who is Christ,
we magnify you, O God.

We magnify you, O God.

Send your Spirit on all who receive your Word.

Nurture our faith with your grace,
accompany us with your might,
and empower our zeal for your justice and joy.

For your Word through the church,
we praise you, O God.

We praise you, O God.

All praise to you, holy God,
today, tomorrow, and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit we pray as Jesus taught:

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.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

Blessing - Presiding Minister

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,
✠ now and forever.
Amen.

Dismissal - Assistant Minister

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude - Cantor