

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT



**Rejoice in the Lord Always!
December 15, 2024**

Everyone is asked to silence or put their **cell phones** on vibrate while attending church services.

AS WE GATHER

Are you feeling the joy? At this point in the month of December, studies show that many people are not feeling joy. Many people are feeling overwhelmed as they approach Christmas, feeling stressors that include not having enough money, missing loved ones, and anticipating family conflict. No matter how we come to our time of worship today, even if stressed, distracted, and frazzled, what great timing to hear what God speaks to us in this season and each day. From all our Readings today, we hear of joy! It is a joy not based on our own momentary perspectives of how things should go, but rather a joy from God's eternal perspective for our sake and what has freely been done for us. As our Advent season continues, may our true joy be found in the one for whom we prepare—Christ, who was born for us and who is with us and for us and is today in our midst as He comes to us in the means of grace.

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

John 1:5, 9; 15:10–11; Psalm 100:1–5

Pastor: We light the third Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh, and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

People: **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Pastor: The third, pink Advent candle has been known as the shepherd candle or the candle of joy. The third Sunday of Advent is known also

as Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete* in Latin means “rejoice,” as found in Philippians 4:4. We find our joy in Christ this season and always as we prepare to celebrate His birth. Jesus affirms the joy found only in Him as we remain connected to Him: “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

People: **The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.**

Pastor: Guided by the light of joy, we respond with the psalmist: “Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!

People: **Know that the LORD, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.**

Pastor: Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise!

People: **Give thanks to Him; bless His name!**

Pastor: For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever,

People: **and His faithfulness to all generations.”**

Three Advent candles are lit.

HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

LSB 357

5 O come, Thou Key of Da - vid, come, And o - pen
 6 O come, Thou Day - spring from on high, And cheer us
 7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind In one the

wide our heav'n - ly home; Make safe the way that
 by Thy draw - ing nigh; Dis - perse the gloom - y
 hearts of all man - kind; Bid Thou our sad di -

leads on high, And close the path to mis - er - y.
 clouds of night, And death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
 vi - sions cease, And be Thy - self our King of Peace.

Refrain

Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el

Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Text and tune: Public domain

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Philippians 4:4-7

Pastor: As we gather today to hear God's Word and call upon Him in prayer and praise, we come before Him as people who are broken by an imperfect world, burdened by sin, and bearing guilt for the things we have done and the things we have left undone. In the midst of our condition, the Word of God speaks to us. In today's Epistle, we hear, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."

People: **We confess we do not rejoice in everything; instead, we let the weight of this world bring us down. Instead of seeing all good things from Your hand, at times we focus on that which does not give You glory nor bring lasting joy to our lives.**

Pastor: "Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand."

People: **We confess we have at times been unreasonable in our relationships with others and in our relationship with You. Our witness to Your grace has faltered.**

Pastor: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

People: We confess we have been anxious about our sin and our circumstances of life. Create in us a clean heart and renew in us a right spirit that we may abide in Your love and that Your joy may be in us, and our joy may be full.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As an ordained servant of the Word, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

People: Amen.

Kyrie

LSB 186

C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Into the darkness, You bring light, and into our lives, You bring lasting joy.

People: Fill us with Your Spirit that we may rightly prepare and welcome the Savior promised and born for us, that in Him, Your joy may be known, and our joy may be complete;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Zephaniah 3:14–20

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. ¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. ¹⁷ The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud

singing. ¹⁸ I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach. ¹⁹ Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰ At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes," says the LORD.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

Philippians 4:4–7

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at

hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication 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.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 7:18–28

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the seventh chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²⁰And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" ²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

²⁴When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written,

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'

²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding

LSB 345



1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is
2 Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, Let the
3 See, the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, Comes with
4 So, when next He comes in glo - ry And the
△ 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the



near," we hear it say. "Cast a - way the
earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ, its sun, all
par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with
world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us
Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -



works of dark - ness, All you chil - dren of the day!"
sloth dis - pel - ling, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv'n;
with His mer - cy And with words of love draw near.
liv - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

Text and tune: Public domain

SERMON

NICENE CREED

People: I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the
dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and
glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Philippians 4:4

Pastor: Let us pray for the church, for the people of God, and for all people according to their needs.

People: We praise You, O Lord, for the joys You have given us in this life. For each day You grant us in this life, we rejoice in You always,
again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For the opportunities You give us to share Your Word to children, family, friends, neighbors, and communities, and for the privilege we carry to model Your love and to give a reason for the hope that we have, we rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For those who face their days with struggle and sorrows, especially those who ask for our prayers, that even though in this world we have trouble, we take heart that Christ has overcome the world. We rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For those who serve our nation here and across the world in the armed forces, for those who keep our community safe through law and order, for those You use to make people well in times of physical and mental distress, and for all vocations in which the gifts and abilities You have given are used on behalf of others, we rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: For the uniqueness of the season of this wintertime, for the blessing of this Advent season of the Church Year as we prepare to welcome again the Savior sent and born for us, and for Your presence and blessings freely given to Your people each and every season, we rejoice in You always,

People: again I will say, Rejoice.

Pastor: Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

OFFERING / OFFERTORY

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

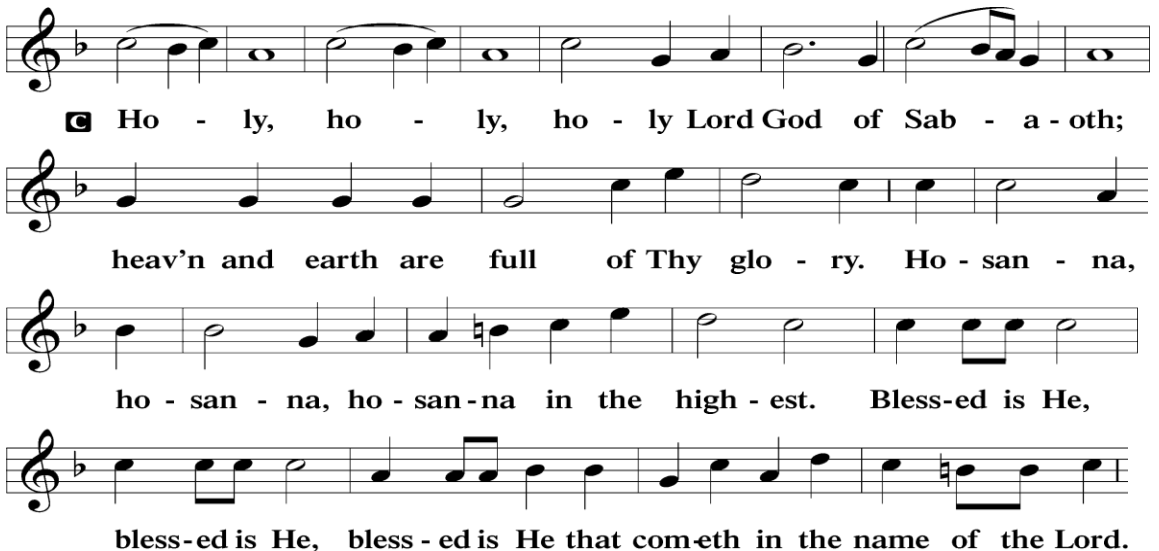
Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, in and through whom we are called to rejoice always. Your kingdom is at hand, and Your kingdom will come on earth as it in heaven as we await the fullness of eternal joys through faith in our Savior, Jesus Christ, who came in our flesh, comes to us now in His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, and promises to come again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

Sanctus

LSB 195



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,
ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,
bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✕ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✕ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

LORD'S PRAYER

People: **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.**

Agnus Dei

LSB 198

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION

Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sin, salvation, and eternal life. All who are baptized and repent of their sins are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good,
People: **for His steadfast love endures forever.**

Pastor: We thank You for the true body and blood shed for us for the forgiveness of sins and nourishment of faith.

People: **Enable us to depart in peace and in joy to serve You and others to the glory of Your name. Amen.**

CLOSING SENTENCES

John 1:5, 9

- Pastor: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- People: **The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

BENEDICTION

- Pastor: Rejoice! . . . Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. The blessing of almighty God—the Father, the ✕ Son, and the Holy Spirit—be with you.
- People: **Amen.**

HYMN

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

LSB 803



- 1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore Thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
2 All Thy works with joy sur-round Thee, Earth and heav'n re - flect Thy rays,
△ 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, Ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore Thee, Prais-ing Thee, their sun a - bove.
Stars and an-gels sing a-round Thee, Cen - ter of un - bro-ken praise.
Well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, O - cean-depth of hap-py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, Drive the gloom of doubt a - way.
Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, Flow - 'ry mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it, Foun - tain - head of love di-vine:



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad-ness, Fill us with the light of day.
Chant-ing bird, and flow - ing foun-tain Call us to re - joice in Thee.
Joy - ful, we Thy heav'n in - her - it! Joy-ful, we by grace are Thine!

Text and tune: Public domain

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Annual Voter's Meeting will be TODAY in the Fellowship Hall, immediately after our worship service. The purpose for this meeting is to Vote on the Budget for 2025 and elect our new officers. All members please plan on attending.

Tuesday, December 24,
our Christmas Eve Service will be at 4:00 PM.
No Bible Study will be held on the 24th.
The office will be closed December 25th and 26th.

There will be **no New Year's** services.
**Bible Study will be held on Tuesday morning, January 31st, at
10:00 AM.**

For with you is the fountain of life;



in your light we see light. Psalm 36:9

Fountain of Life Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod

Phone: (623) 933-8246

Website: www.suncitylutheran.org

Pastor Emeritus: Thomas R. Daly

Cell: (480) 522-0777

Email: pastor@suncitylutheran.org

Office Email: execsecretary@suncitylutheran.org

Prayer Requests: Mary Ann Lowell 623-670-6870

Service Times

Sunday

Chancel Choir starting September 88:30 am

Sunday Worship 10:00 am

Bible Study 11:15 am

Tuesday

Mid-week Bible Study 10:00 am

3rd Tuesday Men's Breakfast/Royal Cafe 8:30 am

Wednesday

Quilters 9:00 am

Thursday

1st & 3rd *Permission to Grieve Group* 10:00 am

1st Thursday *Ladies Lunch Bunch* 11:30 am

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday (9am-2pm)

Closed Friday

Fountain of Life Lutheran Church