

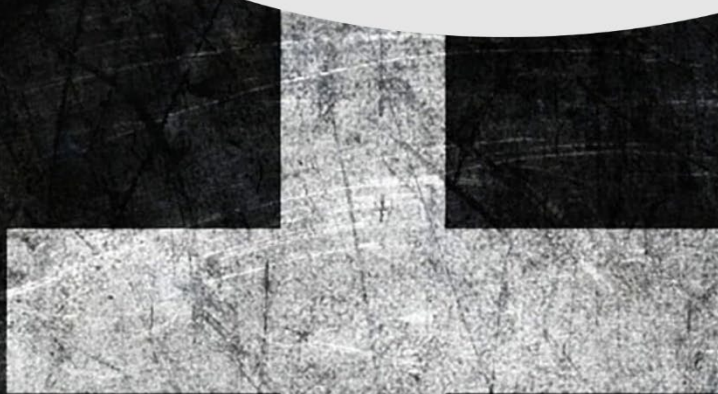
December 11, 2022

3rd Sunday of Advent

Organ: Teresa Bernthal

Usher: Darrin Ream

Acolyte: Seth Bernthal



JOHN 3:16



1449 34th St. NW
Winter Haven, FL 33881
winterhavenlutheran.org

Vance Fossum, Pastor	(803) 556-3161
Neil Bernthal, Teacher	(863) 967-5145
Katie Naumann, Teacher	(253) 230-4184

PRE-SERVICE DEVOTION

“God is Love.” (1 John 4:8)

Welcome in the Name of Jesus!

Perhaps, except for Mary and Joseph, no man knew more about that “silent, holy night” than the apostle John, into whose care our Lord placed his mother, Mary. John was “the beloved” apostle, whose ear was “bent” over and over again as he heard the story from Mary of the little town, the stable, the straw, the animals, the star, and the shepherds. It was such a humble, simple setting for the beginning of the world’s greatest love story. But the deep meaning of this love story was captured by John many years later when he wrote: “And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14) Suddenly, we are reminded that the almighty God, Who brought all things into existence by the power of His creating word, sent His eternal Son into our human flesh as the divine Word. Jesus Christ is the personal expression of the God Who “is Love” and whose gracious will is to save sinners.

Because this divine and eternal Word came for us, He comes to us in the gospel message of Holy Scripture that we might be saved through faith in His word. For it is as Jesus told the Jews: “You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify concerning Me.” (John 5:39) And “faith comes by hearing, and what is heard is the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

We are happily in the business of sharing the Good News of the forgiveness of sins to all people through the preaching. Please ask our usher for any assistance you may need during the service.

The Lighting of the 3rd Advent Candle (The Shepherd’s Candle) and responsive reading:

P The “Shepherd’s Candle” reminds us of the joyful faith of the Bethlehem shepherds who worshiped the Lord Jesus after the angels pointed them to the “babe lying in a manger.” The Shepherd’s Candle may also symbolize to us the coming of the Christ into our own hearts by faith, as well as the joy that results from His coming to us.

C For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord.

P And this will be the sign to you:

C You will find the Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.

P “Behold,” our Lord says “I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door,

C I will come in to him, and dine with him, and he with Me.” (Rev. 3:20)

Order of Divine Worship

Hymn: TLH #90 v.1-4

“Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising”

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

C Amen.

P Pastor

C Congregation

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION:

P Dearly Beloved, the Word of our Lord declares that “God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” (John 3:17). Through the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord says to his believing people: “Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.” Our Savior came to make peace between God and man by covering our sins with His own precious blood. Now He wants to come to us and abide with us – in believing hearts – with His forgiveness and peace. Therefore, let us come near to His throne of grace, seeking forgiveness for all our sins in the Name of Jesus Christ.

C O most merciful God, You have given Your Only begotten Son to die for us. Have mercy upon us, and for His sake grant us the forgiveness of all our sins. By Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Your will, and true obedience to Your Word, so that by Your grace through faith in Jesus Christ we may come to everlasting life; all this we ask in His saving Name. Amen.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us, and for the sake of the sufferings, death and resurrection of His dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, forgives us all our sins. Based on your sincere confession, and by the command of Christ, I declare unto you the forgiveness of all your sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit..

C Amen.

INTROIT

Psalm 71:14-18

P Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

C I will hope continually and will praise you yet more and more.

P My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day, for their number is past my knowledge.

C With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will come; I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.

P O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

C So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.

GLORIA PATRI

Latin for "Glory be to the Father"

C Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost;
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

VERSE OF THE DAY

Matthew 11:10b

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

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

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST *TLH #237:1*

C ♪ All glory be to God on high, Who hath our race befriended! To us no harm shall now come nigh, The strife at last is ended. God showeth His good will to men, And peace shall reign on earth again; O thank Him for His goodness!

P Almighty God, help us to receive Your word of Love and Grace with desperate, believing hearts, so that we may be certain of our eternal Salvation through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

C ♪ A - - - men.

OLD TESTAMENT READING – Micah 5:1-3 Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; He has laid siege against us; They will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek. 2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.” 3 Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel.

NEW TESTAMENT READING – Romans 5:1-11 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. 6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

The 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.

Hymn: TLH #95 v.1-3, 7

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

SERMON – John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

“THE LOVE THAT BRINGS SALVATION, NOT SLAVATION

I. God’s love is God’s gift.

II. God’s love brings the promise of life itself.

OFFERTORY

- C** **♪** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

Hymn: TLH #89 v.1,2,5

“To Thee My Heart I Offer”

- OFFERING OF THANKFUL HEARTS –

Followed immediately by the Offering Hymn printed below:

OFFERING: TLH #442:2

“Lord of Glory, Who Hast Bought Us”

- C** **♪** Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to yield Thee- Gladly, freely, of Thine own; With the sunshine of Thy goodness Melt our thankless hearts of stone Till our cold and selfish natures, Warmed by Thee, at length believe That more happy and more blessed 'Tis to give than to receive.

PRAYERS & the BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

- P** The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace.
- C** **♪** Amen, amen, a – men.

HYMN: WS #709

“God Loves Me Dearly”

✝ Announcements ✝

Last Week: WH – 38 **Total Offering** = \$3,208.25 General = \$2,508.25 |
Benevolence = \$100.00 | Rent = \$600.00

- ✝ **Dec. 11** 8am Orlando service
10:15am WH
- ✝ **Dec. 14** Special Wednesday
Advent Service at 2:00 pm
- ✝ **Dec, 18** 10:15am WH Service
- ✝ Children's Christmas Eve
Service Date to be Determined
- ✝ **Dec. 25** 10:15am Christmas
Day Service

Poinsettia There is a poinsettia list in the back of church. If you would like to donate money for a poinsettia "In Memory Only," please sign the list.

Advent Services This Wednesday we will be having our 3rd special

Advent service at 2:00 p.m. We will be live-streaming the service as well.

Children's Christmas Eve Service There will be a majority of the school children gone for Christmas Eve so there is a proposal to move the date of the Children's Christmas Service to Wednesday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m. If you have any concerns or feedback keeping the date or moving the date, please talk with Mr. Ed Morris. Thank you.

Cleaner (12/17): Ream | **Acolyte (12/18):** Maxwell Kuehne

Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions; Dec. 12 – Dec. 17, '22

Mon Matthew 3:1-6 John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness, as Isaiah had long ago prophesied he would, and John even dressed similar to Elijah (cp2Kg1:8), whom Malachi had said to look for. But the most striking thing about John was his message: The King is near! Prepare for His kingdom by repenting, turning to God for forgiveness.

Tues Matthew 3:7-11 The coming King would not rule on the basis of human strength or goodness, but on the basis of God's goodness and strength. Therefore those who came to John satisfied with their own ways of entering the King's presence were actually following the old serpent. But the Messiah is coming to do away with sin! This is no time to be clinging to it!

Wed 2 Timothy 4:5-8 As Paul is nearing the end of his ministry, he "passes the torch" to young Timothy. He reminds him of the righteousness which comes not from within, but from the Lord as a crown. This is what lies ahead for Paul and for all who have loved the Lord's appearing (v8).

Thurs Isaiah 40:1-2 God's answer to the suffering of His people was double comfort. Speaking of their future hope as already accomplished, the prophet announces the end of their warfare and double forgiveness for the sins which had brought it all on.

Fri Isaiah 40:3-5 The voice calls for smoothing the path for the coming of the LORD. When God's children look upon Christ's coming as glorious (v3), they will want no obstacle to hinder or divert it. For this coming one is "our God" (v3), through the forgiveness which He brings.

Sat Isaiah 40:6-8 The most beautiful and accomplished of humans is short-lived, like grass, and soon withers and fades. Likewise humanity's greatest achievements are like flowers blooming for a day or two in the meadow. But the Word of "our God," by which the heavens were made, brings us pardon, peace, and life forever in Christ.

The Master's Minute (Radio broadcast, Columbia, SC, December 12, 2006)

'Tis the season to be jolly!" -- so we are told. Merchants are happy because business is good. Children are happy for the gifts they receive. It's fun to give and to receive at Christmas. It's a time for merry-making, and many will *drink* to that!

But many will drink too much because their sad and troubled lives are without joy. On the other hand, millions of hungry people all over the world will scramble for a hunk of bread and a swallow of water.

Then there are the people in war-torn countries who have no Christmas lights to cheer them or even a warm house in which to live. Many feel nothing but pain, shame and anger because of the terrible abuse they suffer at the hands of violent men.

And what about those who will celebrate Christmas alone, because their loved ones have died, moved away, or because no one cares for them? Where can we find real joy this Christmas season? How can there be joy in a world of sin, that is being destroyed by its own excesses, lusts, and lovelessness? How can we sing "*Joy to the world!*"?

Because we *don't* sing, "*Joy to the world, I got everything I wanted for Christmas!*" Or "*Joy to the world, my loved ones are here!*" Or "*Joy to the world I have food, friends, health, home, and honor!*" . . . No, we sing "*Joy to the world, **the Lord is come!***" Where death reigned LIFE now rules! Where sin reigned unto death, now GRACE reigns through the righteousness of Christ counted for us so that we shall conquer death and have eternal life through His blood. This is the fullness of our joy at Christmas! May it fill your hearts too!