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# THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

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Sunday, December 17, 2017

## As We Gather

If you light the candles of an Advent wreath at church or at home, it's likely that the color of the candle you light this Sunday is pink. It's also likely that this is the only pink candle on the wreath. Pink is a color of joy. In fact, this Third Sunday in Advent is commonly referred to as "Rejoice Sunday." But don't confuse the joy we celebrate this Advent with a passing happiness. No, the joy we have this Advent is greater. It lasts always. That's what today's Epistle assures us when Paul writes, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Only in Jesus, the coming Savior, can we rejoice in good times and bad times, busy times and quiet times, sick times and healthy times. In Christ, we rejoice always!

Hymn

*Hail to the Lord's Anointed*

LSB 398

*Stand*

## Confession and Absolution

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C** who made heaven and earth.

**P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**C** But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

**P** Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another

that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

**C** Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

**P** 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 Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## Service of the Word

### Introit

*Ps. 85:8–9, 12–13; antiphon: Ps. 85:7*

**P** Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,  
and grant us your salvation.

**C** Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,  
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let  
them not turn back to folly.

**P** Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,  
that glory may dwell in our land.

**C** Yes, the LORD will give what is good,  
and our land will yield its increase.

**P** Righteousness will go before him  
and make his footsteps a way.

**C** 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.

**P** Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,  
and grant us your salvation.

- C** *Lord, have mercy.*  
*Christ, have mercy.*  
*Lord, have mercy.*

## Salutation and Collect of the Day

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## *Sit* Old Testament Reading

*Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

- 1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor;  
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
- 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 grant to those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;  
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.
- 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 wrong;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
- 9 Their offspring shall be known among the nations,  
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge them,  
that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.
- 10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;  
my soul 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 like a priest with a beautiful  
headdress,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- 11 For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,  
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
to sprout up before all the nations.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Gradual

*Zech. 9:9; Ps. 118:26, alt.*

**P** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

**C** Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.

**P** Behold, your king is coming to you;

**C** righteous and having salvation.

**P** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

**C** From the house of the Lord we bless you.

## Epistle

*1 Thessalonians 5:16–24*

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

<sup>23</sup>Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand Holy Gospel*

*John 1:6–8, 19–28*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

<sup>19</sup>And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” <sup>20</sup>He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” <sup>22</sup>So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” <sup>23</sup>He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

<sup>24</sup>(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) <sup>25</sup>They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” <sup>26</sup>John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, <sup>27</sup>even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” <sup>28</sup>These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

**C** 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  $\dagger$  of the world to come. Amen.

## Sit Children's Message

Hymn            *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*            LSB 345

Sermon            *"The Reason to Celebrate"*            John 1:23

### Stand Prayer of the Church

**P** Let us come before our Lord in prayer, asking Him to hear our prayer and grant us joy.

Lord of joy, during this season of Advent, prepare our hearts that we would be made ready to receive Your Son as He comes in His incarnation and birth, but also in His body and blood. Make us ever ready for His final coming on the Last Day. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer and grant us joy.

**P** Lord of joy, You have called Your Church to bear witness to Christ's redeeming work. Grant that we boldly proclaim the Good News of the One who brings joy to the world through His life, death, and resurrection, that all who hear it may receive the gift of salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer and grant us joy.

**P** Lord of joy, You have instructed us to pray for workers in Your harvest field. Raise up faithful and loving teachers of Your Word so that Christ may be proclaimed near and far. Make us Your instruments to encourage and equip individuals for work in Your Church. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer and grant us joy.

**P** Lord of joy, we ask that You stretch forth Your almighty arm to protect the men and women who serve in the Armed Forces of our land. Support them, granting them courage and loyalty. Strengthen them to serve with integrity and honor. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer and grant us joy.

**P** Lord of joy, You are the creator and sustainer of all things. According to Your will, grant healing to those who suffer in

body and mind. Look with favor upon Your servants, [especially . . .], and if it is Your will, restore them to health, or give them grace to accept tribulation, knowing that Your grace is sufficient for them. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer and grant us joy.

**P** Lord of joy, thank You for calling us to be Your people through Holy Baptism. Make us ready to receive Your Supper as we remember the One who is truly present in this Meal as He comes to us in Holy Communion. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer and grant us joy.

**P** Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy and Your promise to hear us for the sake of the One in whose name we come, Your Son, Jesus Christ.

**C** Amen.

## Sit Offering

*While we worship the Lord with our offerings, please write your names in the fellowship registers, indicating the date and time of the service you are attending. To help us serve you more effectively, please use the blanks provided to indicate a change in mailing address, phone numbers (home, work, cell, fax) or e-mail address(es). Please tear out the sheets with names on them and let them stick out of the top of the folder so that the ushers can collect them. Thank you!*

## Service of the Sacrament

### Stand Preface

LSB 208

**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 Him thanks and praise.

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You

so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus 

LSB 208

**C** *Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;  
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim  
shout the glory of Your name.  
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;  
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord.*

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

**P** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your boundless mercy You sent Your servant, John the Baptist, to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of heaven draws near.

With thankful hearts we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus," confident that in His body and blood, given us to eat and drink, we receive the forgiveness of sins and so proclaim His death until He comes again in glory.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

## Lord's Prayer

LSB 209

- C** 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.

## The Words of Our Lord

### Pax Domini

LSB 209

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**C** Amen.

### Agnus Dei ♪

LSB 210

- C** *O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.*  
  
*O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,  
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.*

### Sit Distribution Hymn

*Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness*

LSB 636

**C** *O Lord, now let Your servant  
Depart in heav'nly peace,  
For I have seen the glory  
Of Your redeeming grace:  
A light to lead the Gentiles  
Unto Your holy hill,  
The glory of Your people,  
Your chosen Israel.*

*All glory to the Father,  
All glory to the Son,  
All glory to the Spirit,  
Forever Three in One;  
For as in the beginning,  
Is now, shall ever be,  
God's triune name resounding  
Through all eternity.*

### Post-Communion Collect

**P** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## Benedicamus and Benediction

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**C** Amen.

Hymn

*Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*

*LSB 515*

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