

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 17, 2023
9:30 A.M.



We Gather in Jesus' Name

Prelude (a time for silent meditation)

Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are careless with creation's bounty.
Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.
Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:
God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.
In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.
Amen.

Gathering Song: "How Many Kings"

Verse 1

Follow the star to a place unexpected
Would you believe after all we've projected
A child in a manger
Lowly and small the weakest of all
Unlikeliest hero wrapped in His mother's shawl
Just a child Is this who we've waited for

Chorus 1

How many kings stepped down from their
thrones
How many lords have abandoned their homes
How many greats have become the least for me
And how many gods have poured out their
hearts
To romance a world that is torn all apart
How many fathers gave up their sons for me

Verse 2

Bringing out gifts for the newborn Savior
All that we have whether costly or meek
Because we believe
Gold for His honor and frankincense for His
pleasure
And myrrh for the cross He'll suffer
Do you believe
Is this who we've waited for

Chorus 2

How many kings stepped down from their thrones
How many lords have abandoned their homes
How many greats have become the least
How many gods have poured out their hearts
To romance a world that is torn all apart
How many fathers gave up their sons for me
Only one did that for me

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Advent 3

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow.
You bring water to parched ground and life out of death.
Bless us as this light grows,
and send sorrow and sighing to flee away.
Give us strength and patience,
trusting that you are true to your promises.
Transform the lives of all who suffer
with your wonders near at hand.

Amen.

Light the third candle.

"Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel"

3. Oh, come, strong Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain*

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Prayer of the Day

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.

Readings for The Third Sunday of Advent

“Sunday School Presents The Nativity”

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-4, 8-11

¹The 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;
²to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³to 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.
⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁸For 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.

⁹Their 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.

Psalm: Psalm 126

¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.”**

³The LORD has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.

⁴**Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.**

⁵Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.

**⁶Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

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: John 1:6-8, 19-28

P: The Holy Gospel according to John the 1st Chapter

C: 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.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Song of Praise: "Star Child"

Star Child, earth Child, go between of God,
love Child, Christ Child, heaven's lighting rod,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Street child, beat child, no place left to go,
hurt child, used child, no one wants to know,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Grown child, old child, memory full of years,
sad child, lost child, story told in tears,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Spared child, spoiled child, memory full of years,
wise child, faith child, knowing joy in store,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Hope-for-peace Child, God's stupendous sign,
down-to-earth Child, Star of stars that shine,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the
dead.**

**I believe In the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

Prayers of the Church

(Each prayer ends with ...*Merciful God, the congregation responds: receive our prayer.*)

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you

The Offering Please leave your offering on our website: https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=Dc8dzPGn4-LCajFevTkh9MYPcImH2sG-jdxWYJMFGW_lQfxkD4hBw8WoQ6UZLveQvLkSxosar2o939JWiAad87o7zqy-JU_UuLu19bUbJx2MmPFcXvWIUz6A7FDgkhUKkoPpduXvnt8gXUeZjQYbn9G3frHWC59Y_VCHQ6_VCoE=&ver=3

The Offertory

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray... **God our provider,
by your merciful hand
abundance springs up from the earth.
Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.
Let them be a sign of your steadfast love
and faithfulness for all people,
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.**

Sacrament

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Distribution

The body of Christ, given to you
The blood of Christ, shed for you

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray... Generous God,
in bread and cup, you have revealed your glory
for all people to see together.
Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

Sending

Blessing

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. **Amen.**

Sending Song: "Joy Has Dawned"

Joy has dawned upon the world,
Promised from creation:
God's salvation now unfurled,
Hope for every nation.
Not with fanfares from above,
Not with scenes of glory.
But a humble gift of love:
Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky
With the songs of angels,
As the mighty Prince of Life
Shelters in a stable.
Hands that set each star in place,
Shaped the earth in darkness,
Cling now to a mother's breast,
Vulnerable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb,
Gazing at the glory;
Gifts of men from distant lands
Prophesy the story.
Gold, a King is born today,
Incense, God is with us,
Myrrh, His death will make a way,
And by His blood He'll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of heaven,
Given as a ransom,
Reconciling God and man,
Christ our mighty Champion.
What a Savior, what a Friend,
What a glorious mystery:
Once a babe in Bethlehem,
Now the Lord of history.

Dismissal

Beloved of God,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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OUR MISSION – FAITHFUL IN THE WORD

- + To *gather* as God’s people and nurture one another.
- + To *know* the Word of God
- + To *grow* in faith, love, and service
- + To *go* into the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ.



SERVING OUR LORD IN WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor:	The Rev. Matthew E Ollikainen
Music Director	Michael Dettra
Worship Assistant	John Flint



ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar Flowers are dedicated by Cindy Frey in honor of the birthday of her son, Drew, and John Flint in honor of his wife, Victoria’s birthday.

NUEVA CREACIÓN MISSION SUPPORT

Support of Nueva Creación Lutheran Church in Philadelphia for this week is given by Janice Hoffmann in honor of all who serve others.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Sunday, December 10, 8:00 am 20 9:30 am 31 **TOTAL 51**



POINSETTIA SIGN UP BY DECEMBER 17

A sign-up sheet for dedicating poinsettias for Christmas Eve is on the table in the narthex. Please sign up by **December 17**. You can also call the office to leave your dedication. Poinsettias may be picked up any time after the 7:30 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. The cost will be \$15.00.



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE IN DECEMBER

On Christmas Eve, **December 24**, and New Year’s Eve, **December 31**, there will be **no Sunday School class**. Class will resume on **January 7**.

PASTOR MATT’S END OF DECEMBER SCHEDULE

Pastor Matt will be out of the office from Tuesday, December 26, and will return Wednesday, January 3. Pastor Bo Banister will be providing emergency pastoral coverage for Pastor Matt while he is away. Pastor Banister can be reached at 765-426-0500.

CHURCH OFFICE SCHEDULE FOR END OF DECEMBER

The church office will not be attended during the week of Tuesday, December 26, and will reopen on Wednesday, January 3.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

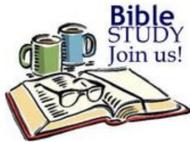
Financial Report For November 2023		
	Rec'vd for Nov 2023	Budget for Nov 2023
General Fund	\$12,684.93	\$17,281.00
Mortgage	\$2,601	\$1,898.00
Bene. - Synod Only	\$63	\$134
Other Benevolence	\$817	
Total	\$16,165.93	\$19,313.00
	Recv'd YTD 1/1-11/30/23	Budget YTD 1/1-11/30/23
General Fund	\$127,253.79	\$190,091.00
Mortgage	\$25,955.00	\$20,878.00
Bene. - Synod Only	\$708.00	\$1,474.00
Other Benevolence	\$7,548.00	
Total	\$161,464.79	\$212,443.00



PING PONG - TUESDAYS AT 6:30

All are welcome to join us for an evening of Ping Pong at the church on Tuesday nights at 6:30pm.

Please call the church 215-355-2529 if you want to give it a try. (It helps to know how many tables to set up).



**Bible
STUDY**
Join us!

THURSDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY, 7:00 PM via ZOOM

The study is on the book *Bonhoeffer* by John W. Matthews. From the Theology for Life Series, it is a brief overview of the life and writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89632518358?pwd=Smg5dm1Ba0VZamZjNG1YMko2MlVvdz09>

Meeting ID: 896 3251 8358 Passcode: 011905



STITCH CLUB

The Stitch club items are **available throughout the year**. If you need any of the items made by the Stitch Club, i.e., blankets, hats, baby items, please contact Hanna McCollum, 215-262-9032, or Jeff Jobes, 215-355-4149



ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATION

The 2024 sign-up sheet to dedicate flowers to beautify the altar each Sunday is available. Please sign up on the sheet on the table in the narthex with your name and dedication. Two bouquets are available each week. The cost is \$25 per bouquet. In addition to making the altar more beautiful, you take the flowers home after the late service to enjoy during the week. If you

have any questions call Cindy Frey 267-205-0713.



NUEVA CREACION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Please consider supporting our sister congregation, Nueva Creación Lutheran Church, which does vital ministry in North Philadelphia. A sign-up chart is on the table in the narthex near the entrance to the sanctuary.



DRIVE in AND DROP off FOOD COLLECTION

If you have food for the Warminster Food Bank that you or your friends would like to donate and the church is not open, just drive in and drop off the food under the seat of the bench outside the front door. You may still bring food into the church narthex during church and

office hours. A list of the Food Bank's most needed items is in the narthex or on the website www.warminsterfoodbank.org. Thank you for helping our neighbors in need.

THIS WEEK AT ADVENT

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 17

- 8:00 am Traditional Holy Communion
- 9:30 am Contemporary Holy Communion
Sunday School age 4 – grade 6
- 10:30 am Fellowship Time: George Henry

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

- 7:30 pm A.A. Open Meeting

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

- 6:30 pm Ping Pong

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

- 6:30-7:15 Praise Band Practice
- 7:15-8:00 Vocal Choir Practice

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

- 7:00 pm Bible Study via Zoom

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

- 7:30 pm A.A. Step Meeting

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVE – DECEMBER 24

- 9:00 am Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
- 10:30 am Fellowship Time: Open
- 10:45 am Adult Bible Study
- 7:30 pm Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion