

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 15, 2024

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
1229 Jefferson Heights Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235
412-824-4525
E-Mail: EastmontELC@Hotmail.com
www.emmanuelutheraneastmont.org
Rev. Linda Orsen Theophilus, Pastor
420 Nike Drive - 412- 824-5945/412-401-5742 cell

INVOCATION

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

p. 117

HYMN #266 ELW

"All Earth is Hopeful"

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

KYRIE

PRAYER OF THE DAY - Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

ZEPHANIAH 3:14-20

PSALM ISAIAH 12:2-6

SECOND LESSON

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

VERSE: Alleluia, Lord to whom shall we go. You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL

LUKE 3:7-18

REFLECTION: Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

HYMN #249 ELW

INSERT

"On Jordan's Bank"

"Junto al Jordán"

NICENE CREED

p. 126

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick *especially*. . . Show your compassion and remember your people in love.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

SHARING of the PEACE

OFFERING *Allelu, Allelu, Allelu Gracias Senor*

HOLY COMMUNION with LORD'S PRAYER p. 129

BENEDICTION: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

THIS WEEK AT EMMANUEL

SUNDAY	10:00 a.m.	Worship
WEDNESDAY	12:30 p.m.	Midweek Advent Service
	8:00 p.m.	AA

Let us pray for...

Kurt Kusserow, **Bishop, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod**
Peter Asplin, Melissa Stoller, **Assistants to the Bishop**
Elizabeth Eaton, **Presiding Bishop, ELCA**
Bishop Henrik Stubkjær, **President, Lutheran World Federation**
President Modeste, **Tulear Synod, Malagasy Lutheran Church**

HEALING & SPECIAL NEEDS: George & Debbie K., asylum seekers especially children, Rachel F., Pr. Norm M., Peggy E., Marilyn & Brian H., Rose & Chip, Rita, Pres. Carter, Judy H., Kirk D., Noah, Karen M., Len & Carole, Roni, Karin, Tommy C., Karen S., Darlene & Al, Lana, Dayton, Jeffery, Don W., Mindy, Marilaine, Nancy S., Nancy, Aligha, Ron R., Zach F., Katie, Ed, Tyler C., Nan, Sandra, Lisa, Marlene, Bill, Amy, Tony, Patty N., Marylen, Yuri, Roy, Leilani, Lynn F., Pr. Tony Schneck, Shelly, Debbie, & all with flu, RSV, COVID and unknown illnesses.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY: Nancy Egan.

NURSING HOME / ASSISTED LIVING: Mary Jane Freund (Concordia Ridgewood-Plum); Shirley & Jack Pickens (William Penn Center); Roni Mayhood (Merakey); Esther Schwab (Beatty Point) June Minnear (Beatty Point Village); Evelyn Rae Dodson (Harmarville Village); Georgetta Colton (Seneca Place).

CAREGIVERS: Judy M., Chris, Chip, Rebecca, Darlene, Elaine.

HOUSING NEEDS:

EMPLOYMENT: Derrick, Yelisbeth, Cassie, Tyler.

COUNTRY OF THE MONTH: Israel and Palestine

MISSION PARTNER: Holy Trinity - East Pittsburgh

CHURCH OF THE MONTH: St. John's North Versailles

LUTHERAN AGENCY: Glade Run Lutheran Services

SCHOOL OF THE MONTH: Penn Hills High School

First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
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.

Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-6

In your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (Is. 12:6)

Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the Lord God is my strength and my might,
and has become my salvation.

**With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.**

And you will say in that day:

Give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name;
Make known the deeds of the Lord among the nations;
proclaim that this name is exalted.

**Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.**

Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Second Reading: Philippians 4:4-7

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry 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.

Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2024 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.