



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.

# **Third Sunday of Advent**

**Sunday, December 15, 2024**

**St. John's Lutheran Church  
1000 Helena Ave.  
Helena, Montana 59601**

*Please be aware that as we stream this service to a live audience you may appear on camera when you are worshiping with us. We welcome those who attend online and are part of our worshiping community! Please respond with the words in **bold print** and stand, as you are able, at the places marked with an \**

**Prelude:**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!” Henry Danielson, piano  
“Lightly Row” Julia Pritchard, cello and Jocelyn Pritchard, violin  
“Ode to Joy” Elizabeth Danielson, piano  
“The First Noel” and “O Come All Ye Faithful” Maria Lee, violin

**Welcome and Announcements:**

*(Silence is observed to center our hearts for worship.)*

**Psalm; Isaiah 12:2-6:** ..... Allison Tetrault, Cantor

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

- <sup>2</sup> 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.
- <sup>3</sup> With joy you | will draw water  
from the wells | of salvation.
- <sup>4</sup> 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.
- <sup>5</sup> Sing praises to the LORD,  
for he has done | gloriously;  
let this be known in | all the earth.
- <sup>6</sup> Shout aloud and sing for joy, O | royal Zion,  
for great in your midst is the Holy | One of Israel.



**\*Confession and Forgiveness:**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,  
alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*(Silence is kept for reflection.)*

God of mercy,  
**we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

God of might,  
**we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

God in our midst,  
**we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

A righteous branch springs forth:  
it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.  
By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God  
through Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**



**\*Opening Hymn: .....“Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn”.....ELW #242**



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for  
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -  
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when  
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for  
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is  
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so  
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.  
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;  
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.  
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -  
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -  
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in  
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and  
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to  
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and  
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.  
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

**\*Apostolic 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.**

**\*Prayer of the Day:**

Let us Pray. 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**

**Lighting of Advent Candle**

**Third Sunday in Advent Prayer: ..... Micah Langdji**

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.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation: ..... “Come Now, O Prince of Peace” .....ELW# 247**

Verse 3

**Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior.**

**Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.**

**“The Nativity” .....St. John’s Lutheran Church Youth**

**\*Sharing of the Peace:**

*(...Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (John 20:19))*

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*(The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say "Peace be with you" or similar words.)*

**Offering:**

*(An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need and the communion table is set.)*

**Offertory Anthem ..... " Ding Dong! Merrily on High" ..... by G.R. Woodward  
Kate Lee, Piano**

**Offertory Response: ..... "Create In Me"..... ELW # 185**

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



**\*Offering Prayer:**

Let us pray. Creator God,

**you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us.  
We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live  
in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Amen.**

**\*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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**\*Sanctus: (Holy, Holy, Holy—sung to the tune of Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent)**

*Holy, holy, holy, holy*

*God of power and God of might.*

*Heaven and earth declare your glory*

*hail hosanna Lord of light.*

*Blessed be the coming Savior.*

*Hail hosanna Lord most high.*

**\*Words of Institution:**

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:  
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.  
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.  
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.  
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.  
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,  
the Word made flesh.

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.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.  
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us.  
Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate,  
Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*Lords Prayer:**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.  
Amen.**



**\*Invitation to Communion:**

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

*(We celebrate open communion and all who are baptized are welcome to receive the forgiving and gracious presence of Christ in communion. Those who prefer not to commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.)*

**Lamb of God:** .....“What Feast of Love” ..... ELW #487  
verse 1

*What feast of love is offered here,  
what banquet come from heaven?  
What food of everlasting life,  
what gracious gift is given?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
the bread come down from heaven.  
Oh, taste and see and sing!  
How sweet the manna given!*

**Communion:** ..... “ Joy to the World” ....Ella Ky, flute and Jocelyn Pritchard, guitar  
“Away in a Manger– Three Traditional Carols” .....Allison Tetrault, Soprano

**Prayer After Communion:**

Let us Pray.

Generous God,  
we thank you for the gift of life,  
for the bread of salvation.  
We thank you for coming among us,  
for leading us into peace.  
We thank you for showering us with mercy,  
for sending us into the world.  
Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us  
as we feed the hungry in your name.

**Amen.**

**\*Blessing:**

God of endings and beginnings,  
God in the darkness and the light,  
God, our hope for the journey,  
+ bless and keep you now and forever,

**Amen.**

## Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748  
Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

### **\*Dismissal:**

Go forth and Grow in Grace, Walk by Faith, and Serve in Love

Thanks be to God.

**Postlude:** ..... **“New World Symphony Theme”** ..... **Sydney McNally, piano**

## Ministering in Worship

<b>Preaching and Presiding</b>	Pastor Keith Weatherford
<b>Choir Director</b>	Connie Conley
<b>Worship Musician</b>	Gretchen Munding
<b>Bell Choir Directors</b>	Abby Nyhof, Renee Slocum, Christina Tielking
<b>Technology</b>	Angela Conley
<b>Ushers</b>	
<b>Acolytes</b>	
<b>Lector</b>	
<b>Communion Servers</b>	JoAnn Dotson, Paul Gronbeck, Gwynn Munding, John Munding
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Danyel Bauer, Makayla Bauer, Linda Wollitz, Karen Doig
<b>Prayer Station</b>	Bette March

## Prayers

### In our prayers:

Linda McDonald, Susan Olson, Mike McDonald, Paula Blessinger, Diane Evans, Tammy Tetrault, Susan Boettcher, Ken Downing, Rosita Moe, Bruce Gottwig, Bob Sorensen, Deb Berg, Meg Biggs and family, Richard Bomar, Jeff Shirley, Jeremy Stockstad, Tatiana Ceaicovschi, Randy Holmes, Kamila Ruth Baker, Vicki Alpiner, Brent Bushnell, Tom Andersen, Sally Indreland, Jana Clark, Dan Jacobson

### For those in residential living centers, extended care or homebound:

Mary Marty, Rev. Wayne Olsen, Rosita Moe, Esther Fuehrer, Julie Wolff, Adeline Rasmussen, Susan DeBree, Jimmie McGee

### For those who are deployed and getting ready to deploy:

Evan Ceaicovschi, Raffy Suchikul, Maggie Smiedala

**For those who have died and now rest in God's merciful care:** All the Saints in Heaven

**Missionaries:** Missionaries around the world; Willie Langdji in Cameroon

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**Thank you to the Youth of St. John's Lutheran Church who participated in worship today.**

Usher: Liam Farrell

Puppets: Elizabeth Danielson, Henry Danielson, Christian Wilde-Spiger, Leni Elverum, Luella Elverum, Calvin Elverum, Ida Elverum, Xander Gore, Norah McNally

Pageant Narrators: Ben Mundinger-Adsay, Cora Ky

Adult Helper: Honora Tetrault

Reader: Micah Langdji

Musicians: Kinley Weatherford, Lauren Eckdahl, Jocelyn Pritchard, Julia Pritchard, Ella Ky,

Ayla Mundinger-Adsay, Sydney McNally, Elizabeth Danielson, Henry Danielson Maria Lee, Kate Lee, Allison Tetrault

Thanks to all who helped make the Festival of Angels a success. We served pie and coffee; sold Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate bars, and all of the lefsa. Our baked goods were such a hit, they sold out within thirty minutes! The Helena community looks forward to our Festival every year. They supported our tradition with over \$4000.00 to share with Lutheran Disaster Response, United Way's housing program in Helena and upkeep for St. John's property.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES**

**Sunday, December 15: 9:30 am– Worship/Holy Communion and Christmas Pageant  
10:30 am– Fellowship  
10:45 am– New Testament Bible Study**

**Monday, December 16: 10 am– Staff Meeting  
6:00 pm–Celebration Ringers practice**

**Tuesday, December 17: 12 noon– New Testament Bible Study**

**Wednesday, December 18: 9 am–Quilting  
5:15 pm–Bells of St. John's practice  
6:30 pm–Midweek Connection Christmas Party**

**Thursday, December 19: 7:00 pm–Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal**

**Saturday December 21: 6:30 pm Blue Christmas Ecumenical Service**

**Sunday December 22: 9:30 am– Worship/Holy Communion  
10:30 am– Fellowship  
10:45 am– New Testament Bible Study**

**Monday, December 23: 10 am– Staff Meeting  
6:00 pm–Celebration Ringers practice**

**Tuesday, December 24: 6:30 pm–Christmas Eve Service**

### **Mass of Brass:**

It's time for a Mass of Brass! The South Hills Brass Quintet and the Continental Divide Tuba Society proudly present their annual joint Christmas concert, A Mass of Brass for Christmas. The concert will feature a variety of music from traditional carols and classical works to modern Christmas favorites. This free concert will take place on Sunday, December 15th, at 3:00 pm at the Covenant United Methodist Church. We hope to see you there!

### **Poinsettias for Christmas:**

We will once again have poinsettias for sale to honor a loved one(s). The flowers will decorate the sanctuary for our Christmas Eve service. Orders are due Sunday, December 15th. Order forms are available in the sanctuary or you can contact the church office. Plants are \$10.

### **Servers Needed:**

It is a busy month at SJLC and each week we need help with ushering, reading, acolyting, and serving communion. Please sign up in the narthex or contact the church office if you are available to help.

### **Social Ministry for December:**

Social Ministry is hosting a Giving Tree to support Florence Crittenton, ELCA Good Gifts, and HMS Bob's Pantry Winter Break Snacks. Please take a gift tag off the tree for Florence Crittenton and return your gift card by Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, so that the families can purchase their own family gifts. Thank you for supporting families near and far; any cash donations will go towards snacks and future projects for Bob's Pantry.

Give something unexpected this Christmas! In Christ, we receive the gift of God's love. Let us share God's love with others. **ELCA GOOD GIFTS** are a fun, meaningful way to honor friends and family with Christmas gifts that go on to make a difference in the world. Choose from more than 50 gift-giving options (goats, anyone?), each with the ability to make real, lasting change in the life of someone in need. Give in honor of someone special and you can print, mail or email a card to let them know. [goodgifts.elca.org](http://goodgifts.elca.org)

### **HMS Bob's Pantry Christmas Snack Bags:**

Every year right before Christmas break, the HMS PTSO and school counselors put together 50 snack bags with granola bars, applesauce, soups, macaroni & cheese cups, etc. for kids who need extra food over the long break. Between school budget cuts and lack of incoming funds for the HMS PTSO, St. John's will be providing the snack bags this year. Thrivent has already helped with the purchase of 50 large gift bags, some food, and games plus we have two action grants to help supplement the purchase of food. We are asking for additional kid friendly, easy to cook food items. Please bring your food donations to church and place them under the Giving Tree. We will have a packing party on Sunday, December 15th following the Christmas Pageant and Worship service at 10:30 am in the Fellowship Hall and will deliver the bags to the school the following week.

### **Nominations are due for Bold Women's Day:**

Voting will be in January 2025. Any woman can nominate another woman at St. John's who is acting boldly on her faith in Jesus. Some are bold in their prayers, others in service, teaching, advocacy or hospitality and caring. Please write a short paragraph that describes the ways the nominee is boldly living her faith. **Nominations need to be in by December 15** to Mary Ruedisili at [nruedisili@yahoo.com](mailto:nruedisili@yahoo.com) or Mait Board at [mightb210@gmail.com](mailto:mightb210@gmail.com).

**Photos for the church directory:** will be taken every Sunday before and after service, and on Wednesday midweek service, throughout December. Contact Bing for more information.

**Blue Christmas Evening Prayer Service—Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup> 6:30pm**

While Advent is a season of hope and Christmas is a season of joy, not everyone feels hopeful or like celebrating. For anyone experiencing loneliness, sadness and loss, the Christmas season can be difficult. But you are not alone, even those who are not struggling with losses may feel overwhelmed by the preparation and expectations of the Christmas season. Knowing we have all experienced loss, we come together seeking God's healing and space to name our woundedness. Please join us in a simple Evening Prayer Service of song, readings and a reflection of God's hope for us and presence with us in feeling what we feel. All are welcome.

**Christmas Eve Worship Tuesday, December 24th 6:30pm**

Festive Music, Holy Communion, and Candlelight

**St Peter's Cathedral Taize Service, December 15th at 4 pm**

This is a 30 minute ecumenical service with moments of silent prayer, simple songs and brief Scripture reading. A time of quiet and reflection during the Christmas season.

**Flute Concert at Covenant United Methodist Church- December 15th, at 7 pm**

A free family friendly hour of holiday music at 2330 E Broadway

**Festival of Lessons and Carols, December 18th, at 7pm**

St. Peter's Cathedral presents this Advent service that is patterned after the King's College celebration at Cambridge, England, the most widely observed Advent service in the world. Free and open to all, and a reception follows.

**Bulletin deadline Wednesday at Noon and**

**January 2025 Herald Deadline, Thursday December 26, 2024**

If you do not have e-mail and would like a copy of the Herald, please contact the church office at 406-442-6270

**New Option for online giving.** Please use the code here for a mobile device online giving. Questions on how this works? Please contact the church office.

