

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
Sunday, December 15, 2024: Third Sunday of Advent
10:00 A.M. Worship

Welcome visitors! We have a weekly email you can join to be notified about upcoming events (aageorge27@sbcglobal.net), as well as a website (www.sov-lc.org) and a Facebook presence.

P: indicated presider

L: indicates Lay Reader

Bold indicates congregational response

*Those in the sanctuary are invited to stand

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE: *Besancon* setting by Nancy M. Raabe and *Carol for Advent* by Don Besig sung by the choir

WELCOME

WORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY PRAYER SHARING

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.
Amen.

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

P: 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.

P: God of might,

we confess that we have sinned.

We have turned away from our neighbors.

We have trusted false promises.

P: God in our midst,

we confess that we have sinned.

We plead: come to us.

Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P: 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**

***GATHERING HYMN** *People, Look East* ELW #248

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming

trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
 bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

***GREETING**

P: 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.**

***KYRIE** *sung to the tune of "Silent Night" ELW #281*

Kyrie eleison,
hear our prayer, Blessed One.
We come to hear your living word.
Fill us with your saving power.
Have mer-cy on us Lord,
Have mer-cy on us Lord.

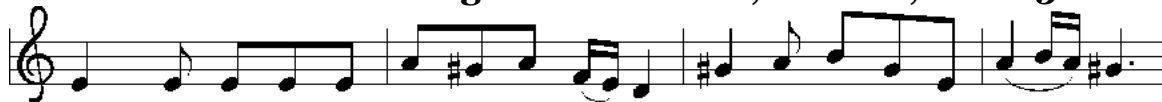
Kyrie eleison,
hear our prayer, Blessed One
Pour out your grace and make us whole.
Wash our sin and guilt away.
Cre-ate in us new hearts.
Cre-ate in us new hearts.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH – CHILDREN’S TIME

P: The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

P: 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.**

“Light One Candle”, verses 1, 2 and 3



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIFIN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
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WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

A Reading from Zephaniah 3:14-20

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The 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.

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

¹⁷ The 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
¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

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

¹⁹ I 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.

²⁰ At 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.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-6

² 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.

**³ With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.**

⁴ 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 his name is exalted.

**⁵Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.**

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

A Reading from Philippians 4:4-7

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Word of God, Word of Life **Thanks be to God**

***ALLELUIA** *sung to the tune of "Once in Royal David's City"* ELW #269

Alleluia! Lord and savior;
open now your saving Word.
Let it burn like fire within us;
speak until our hearts are stirred!
Alleluia! Lord, we sing
for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁷ John 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? ⁸ Bear 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. ⁹ Even 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."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers 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."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John 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. ¹⁷ His 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."

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

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Pastor Gaeta

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *How Clear is our Vocation Lord* ELW#580



1 How clear is our vo - ca - tion, Lord, when once we heed your call
2 But if, for - get - ful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;
3 We mar - vel how your saints be - come in hin - dranc - es more sure;
4 In what you give us, Lord, to do, to - geth - er or a - lone,



to live ac - cord - ing to your word and dai - ly learn, re - freshed, re - stored,
if world - ly pres - sures fray the mind and love it - self can - not un - wind
whose joy - ful vir - tues put to shame the ca - sual way we wear your name,
in old rou - tines or ven - tures new, may we not cease to look to you,



that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.
its tan - gled skein of care: our in - ward life re - pair.
and by our faults ob - scure your pow'r to cleanse and cure.
the cross you hung up - on, all you en - deav - ored done.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000
Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918
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RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBER: Judy Bielicki

P: Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism and for *Judy Bielicki*, one with us in the body of Christ, who is joining Shepherd of the Valley by making public affirmation of her baptism.

P: Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you for Judy whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism.

You have called her to yourself, enlightened her with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished her in the community of faith.

Uphold your servant in the gifts and promises of baptism and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth.

We ask this in the name of Christ.

Amen.

P: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

I renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

You have made public profession of your faith.

Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:
to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

Judy: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

P: People of God, do you promise to support *these sisters and brothers* and pray for *them* in their life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

P: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life.

Stir up in Judy the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Amen.

L: Let us rejoice with these sisters and brothers in Christ.

We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. Together we will give thanks and praise to God and proclaim the good news to all the world.

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

L: 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.**

L: 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.**

L: 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.**

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

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

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

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

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: 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.**

P: 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



MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Christ.

*OFFERING PRAYER

L: 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.**

*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 God thanks and praise.

It is our duty and delight ... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** *sung to the tune of "Angels from the Realms of Glory" ELW #275*

Holy, holy, Lord most holy,
God of pow'r and God of might:
Heav'n and earth reveal your glory.
Hail, hosanna, Lord of light!
Blessed be the coming Savior.
Hail, hosanna, Lord of light!

*EUCHARISTIC PRAYER WITH WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith...

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.



***LORD'S PRAYER**

<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
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LAMB OF GOD *sung to the tune of "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"*

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
of all the world away;
you suffered death our lives to save:
have mercy now we pray.

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
of all the world away;
you set us free from guilt and grave:
have mercy now we pray.

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
of all the world away;
eternal peace with God you made:
give us your peace, we pray.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Communion is offered in gluten-free bread and your choice of wine or white grape juice. The wine is available in the common cup or in individual cups. All who believe Jesus is present in the bread and wine of the communion meal are invited to participate. Children are welcome to receive communion under the guidance of their parents. If you wish to simply receive a blessing, just keep your hand at your side or crossed in front of your chest.

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

***POST-COMMUNION SONG** *sung to the tune of "Angels We Have Heard on High"* ELW
#289

Thank the Lord, your voices raise:
sing to God with highest praise!
Tell the wonders God has done:
freedom, life, the vict'ry won.
Gloria, in excelsis, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

All who seek the Lord, rejoice:
proudly bear the name of Christ.
God in joy where God will send.
Alleluia! Sing amen!
Gloria, in excelsis, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

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.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

*BLESSING

*SENDING HYMN *Prepare the Royal Highway* ELW #264

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing;
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain
Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Praise the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Prepare the Royal Highway* *setting by Curt Oliver*

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