



The blind receive their sight
and the lame walk, lepers are
cleansed and the deaf hear.

MATTHEW 11:5, ESV



First Lutheran Church

2808 South Avenue West

3rd Sunday in Advent
December 14, 2025

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Missoula, MT

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As We Gather

It is certainly easy to complain. We all do it. We look around and see all those things that are not what we think they should be. We look in the mirror and we see what we lack. When John sent his disciples to Jesus, Jesus called them to rejoice in what is already present. Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, had come. He brings healing and salvation to all who will receive Him. Quite literally, these miracles are still happening all around us. Those wounded by affliction and despair find healing in Christ. The dead in trespasses and sins are raised up to life. The weak are made strong, the poor are made rich, and those with only a past are given an eternal future. What do you see and hear? Look at the world, and you will find only complaint and fear; but look to Jesus, and you will find peace that surpasses all understanding and joy without end.

Opening Hymn LSB 515

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



- 1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, And let your lights ap - pear;
- 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain Pro - claim the Bride - groom near;
- 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience Their cross and suf - f'ring bore,
- 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



The eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, And dark - er night is near.
Go forth as He ap - proach - es With al - le - lu - ias clear.
Shall live and reign for - ev - er When sor - row is no more.
A - rise, O Sun so longed for, O'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The Bride - groom is a - ris - ing And soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; The gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry The Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, We plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; At mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; The Bride - groom is at hand.
In tri - umph cast be - fore Him Their di - a - dems of gold.
The day of earth's re - demp - tion That sets Your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907, alt.

Tune: Swedish

Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

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

G Amen.

Confession and Absolution

Psalm 146:5, 7b–8a; Philippians 1:6

P Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

G **The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.**

Silence for self-examination.

P Holy and gracious God,

G **I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and 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.

G Amen.

P He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

G Amen.

GraceNotes

Meditation on Lo, How A Rose

Kyrie

P Kyrie eleison.

G **Lord, have mercy.**

P For peace in our hearts, for peace in the church, and for peace in the world, let us pray to the Lord:

G **Lord, have mercy.**

P For mercy to forgive all our sins, for mercy to forgive the sins of one another, and for mercy for all those in need, let us pray to the Lord:

G **Lord, have mercy.**

P For grace to rule our unruly wills, for grace to prepare to receive the Lord in His Word and Supper, and for grace to be found faithful when He comes at the end of all time, let us pray to the Lord:

G **Lord, have mercy.**

P For hope to preserve us from despair, for hope to bear cheerful witness to Christ before the world, and for hope to sustain us in the hour of trial, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P 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.**

Psalm

Psalm 146; antiphon: v. 5

P Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
I will praise the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Put not your trust in princes,
in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.
When his breath departs he returns to the earth;
on that very day his plans perish.

Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD his God,
who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
who keeps faith forever;
who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;
the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
the LORD loves the righteous.
The LORD watches over the sojourners;
he upholds the widow and the fatherless,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

The LORD will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!

Praise Team (11only)

Comfort Comfort, All My People

(Johannes Olearius, arranged by Koine), Copyright 2008, Judas on Straight Street Publications.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
 the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;
 it shall blossom abundantly
 and rejoice with joy and singing.
 The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
 the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
 They shall see the glory of the LORD,
 the majesty of our God.
 Strengthen the weak hands,
 and make firm the feeble knees.
 Say to those who have an anxious heart,
 "Be strong; fear not!
 Behold, your God
 will come with vengeance,
 with the recompense of God.
 He will come and save you."
 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
 and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
 then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
 and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
 For waters break forth in the wilderness,
 and streams in the desert;
 the burning sand shall become a pool,
 and the thirsty ground springs of water;
 in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down,
 the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
 And a highway shall be there,
 and it shall be called the Way of Holiness;
 the unclean shall not pass over it.
 It shall belong to those who walk on the way;
 even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.
 No lion shall be there,
 nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
 they shall not be found there,
 but the redeemed shall walk there.
 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
 and come to Zion with singing;
 everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
 they shall obtain gladness and joy,
 and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

James 5:7-11

Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

Choir

Now Let All the World Be Silent

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Holy Gospel

Matthew 11:2-15

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

G Glory to You, O Lord.

When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written,

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you."

Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

G I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✝ everlasting. Amen.

Sermon Hymn LSB 345

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding



1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is
2 Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, Let the
3 See, the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, Comes with
4 So, when next He comes in glo - ry And the
△ 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the



near," we hear it say. "Cast a - way the
earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ, its sun, all
par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with
world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us
Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -



works of dark - ness, All you chil - dren of the day!"
sloth dis - pel - ling, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv'n;
with His mer - cy And with words of love draw near.
liv - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

Text: Latin, c. 5th–10th cent.; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–78, alt.

Tune: William H. Monk, 1823–89

Text and tune: Public domain

Offering

Praise Team (11only)

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

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Prayer of the Church

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That the church may proclaim the Good News to the poor, forgiveness to the sinner, and healing to all those afflicted in body or soul, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That hope may rule our hearts against despair and that we may know joy in the midst of trials, giving thanks that Jesus Christ has come to set us free from sin, death, and all our enemies, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That peace may calm our upset hearts and love direct our words and our actions, giving thanks that we shall be raised from this mortal life to everlasting life, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That the nations and all the people may be well served by good and faithful leaders, that violence be replaced with peace among the nations, and for our good citizenship, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That the home may be a place of blessing and love, that marriages may be kept holy, that the lonely may find friendship, and that we may serve one another in love, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we may respect life and gladly serve children and support mothers with child and those whose desire for a child has yet to be fulfilled, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That all those afflicted in body or soul may know healing and peace and that the grieving may be comforted in their loss, [especially . . .], let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

- P** Gracious God, we ask that You grant us all these things and whatever else You would have us ask, out of Your divine fatherly love, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

- 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.

Benediction

- 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.

Closing Hymn LSB 511

Herald, Sound the Note of Judgment



1 Her - ald, sound the note of judg - ment, Warn - ing
 2 Her - ald, sound the note of glad - ness; Tell the
 3 Her - ald, sound the note of par - don— Those re -
 4 Her - ald, sound the note of tri - umph; Christ has



us of right and wrong, Turn - ing us from sin and
 news that Christ is here; Make a path - way through the
 pent - ing are for - giv'n; God re - ceives His way - ward
 come to share our life, Bring - ing God's own love and



sad - ness Till once more we sing the song.
 des - ert For the one who brings God near.
 chil - dren, And to them new life is giv'n.
 pow - er, Grant - ing vic - t'ry in our strife.

Refrain



Sound the trum-pet! Tell the mes-sage: Christ, the Sav-ior king, is come!

Text: Moir A. J. Waters, 1906-80

Tune: David McCarthy, 1931

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Announcements

Please complete the "Friendship Pads" found at the inside aisle holder in each pew and pass it to the others in your row. We especially ask our visitors and guests to share their information with us, so we can stay in touch!

Dismissal

P Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

G Thanks be to God.

Acknowledgments

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