



Sunday, December 14, 2025

Third Sunday of Advent—Christmas Cantata

Introduction

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

Prelude... "O Come O Come Emmanuel"

Announcements

Preparation for Worship – Silent Prayer

Gathering Hymn.... "People Look East"



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.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Music: BESANÇON, French carol

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Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

God With Us, Emmanuel

A Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent

Candle Lighting

Today we light three candles. The first candle reminds us of our hope in knowing Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor. The second candle reminds us of our joy in proclaiming Christ as our Mighty God. We light the third candle to remind us that Jesus is our Prince of Peace. In a world filled with conflict, tension and discord, we look for peace that comes through Christ alone.

Third Sunday of Advent

Responsive Litany—HE WILL BE CALLED PRINCE OF PEACE

P: During Advent we wait for the coming Savior who is our Prince of Peace.

C: The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.

P: In the midst of conflict, we look to the One who brings harmony.

C: The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.

P: In the midst of confusion, we look to the One who brings clarity.

C: The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.

P: In the midst of division, we look to the One who brings unity.

C: The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.

P: In the midst of separation, we look to the One who restores the broken.

C: The Lord gives strength to his people, and blesses them with peace.

Congregation:

Ev-er-last-ing Fa - ther, Prince of Peace,

Won-der-ful Coun - se-lor, Al-might - y God.

Em - man - u - el, Em - man - u - el.

God with us, Em - man - u - el.

Closing Prayer

Gracious Lord, as we continue our Advent journey, we acknowledge that our surroundings are often far from peaceful. By your Spirit, help us to be agents of peace in the world around us. Throughout this season continue to fill us with the peace that surpasses all understanding. We pray this in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Psalm 146 Lord Come and Save Us

Refrain



6-7 The Lord God keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets captives free.
Refrain.

8-9 The Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord raises those who were bowed down. The Lord loves the just; the Lord protects strangers.
Refrain.

9-10 The fatherless and the widow he sustains, but the way of the wicked he thwarts. The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, through all generations.
Refrain.

First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

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 shouting. 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 are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall 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 joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Second Reading: James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

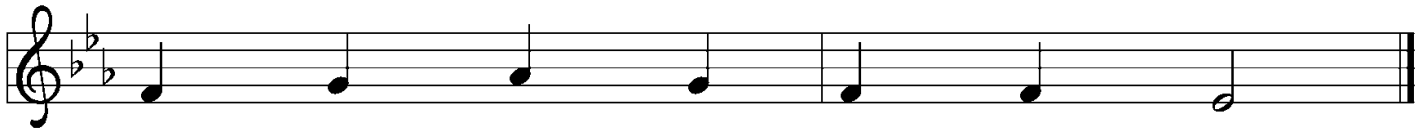
Sermon Hymn..... "Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding!"



1 Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is near," we
2 Wak - ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond - age
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther



hear it say. "Cast a - way the works of dark - ness,
let us rise; Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling,
down from heav'n. Let us haste, with tears of sor - row,
wrapped in fear, he will shield us with his mer - cy
and the Son with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it



all you chil - dren of the day!"
shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
one and all, to be for - giv'n;
and with words of love draw near.
while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of 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.
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 Intercession

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God,
trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the
whole creation.

A brief silence.

God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of
healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from
generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where
wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees

that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. (*We pray especially for Amanda, Jeff, Eric, Barbara, Lizzy, Christi, Debbie, Adrian, Larry, Katie, Angelika, Jenna, Dave, Joy, Frank, Kyle, Tyler, John, Tom, Robert, Pat, Linda, Owen, Barbara, Cherrie, Gene, Shirley, Jana, Kathie, Del, Regan, Geri, Kristen, Janet, Bob, Michael, Peter, Kelly and Brian*). In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the stranger.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

Offering

Offering Song..... "Wait For The Lord"

Offering Prayer

Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

Amen.

Thanksgiving at the Table

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.

The 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

We will be using the intinction method for distribution. You will be handed bread and asked to dip the bread in the chalice. Gluten-free bread and grape juice are available. Please make your way forward by the center aisle, returning down the side. If mobility is a problem for you, please notify an usher and you will be served at your seat.

Invitation to Communion

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

Communion Song... "Heaven In The Real World"

Post Communion Prayer

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Blessing

May God who comes among us, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

Sending Hymn..... "Christ, Be Our Light"



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.

Refrain



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell

Text and music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

Christmas Cantata..... "Joy!" by Joel Raney

- I. Sing Joy!
- II. Waiting
- III. A Song In The Air
- IV. Jesus, What a Wonderful Child
- V. O Come, All Ye Faithful
- VI. Tell It On The Mountain
- VII. Sing Joy! (Reprise)

Cantata Players

Alicia Ferrin - *Piano*
Scott Sims - *Synth*
Dan Wiebe - *Guitar*
Dave Dugwyler - *Bass*
Bradley Wallace - *Drums/Percussion*
Jair Gallardo - *Percussion*
Jesse Milhoan - *Percussion*
Leia Wasbotten - *Singer*
Josh Giles - *Singer*

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.