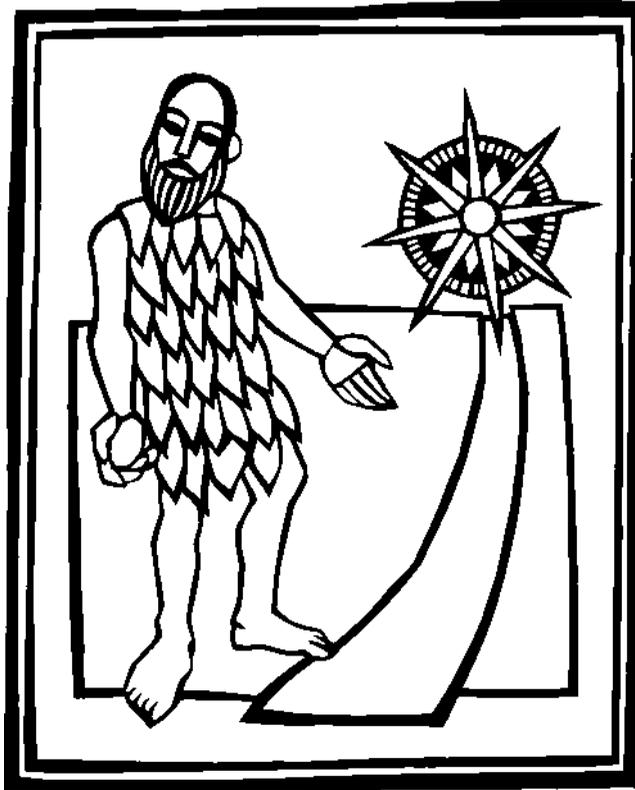


3rd Sunday of Advent



Morning Communion
December 15, 2019 + 8:30am

Zion Lutheran Church
Lexington, South Carolina

*You are invited to use this time before worship begins
for quiet prayer and meditation.*

WELCOME TO WORSHIP at ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH!

We are glad you have come to worship this day!

We especially Welcome our Visitors and Guests!

We hope you feel right at home here at Zion. If you have any questions, our ushers will be happy to help you. You are invited to fill out a Visitor's card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate.

If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to consider becoming a part of this community of faith and learning more about the mission and ministry of Zion. For more information about Zion Lutheran Church, becoming a member, and sharing your gifts in ministry, contact the church office, (803) 356-2297, zionchurch@zionlexsc.com or visit our website, zionlexsc.com.

WORSHIP NOTES



THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION is offered to all baptized Christians who seek Christ's gift of grace. Visitors who receive Holy Communion in their home congregations are invited to share in this sacrament of grace. Gluten free bread is available to those with allergies. You may indicate this need to the pastor during communion distribution. Children who are not receiving communion may come forward for a blessing.

OUR STAFFED NURSERY is available for young children during worship. The nursery is located through the narthex/lobby area and down the hall to the right.

HYMNS not printed in the bulletin are from the red WORSHIP hymnal in the pew rack.

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR ELECTRONICS AT THIS TIME.

+ THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT +

PRELUDE

We stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace. **Amen.**

Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

We kneel. Silence is kept for confession and meditation.

Gracious God, **we confess that we have sinned against you and against our neighbors. We have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We have failed to share the hope that is in us. We have neglected our call to strive for justice and peace. In your great mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news and live in hope, for your God comes to you. **Amen.**

We stand.

GATHERING HYMN # 248

People, Look East

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.**

We sit.

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ²it 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. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say 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." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then 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; ⁷the 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. ⁸A 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. ⁹No 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. ¹⁰And 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We stand.

ADVENT HYMN # 257

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Verses 5-6



GOSPEL READING

Matthew 11:2-11

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

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As 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? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹¹Truly 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.**

We sit.

SERMON

**Waiting for the Day when . . .
. . . Streams of Water break forth in the Desert**
Pastor Nathan Gragg

Silence for reflection. Pastoral prayer.

We stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY # 264

Prepare the Royal Highway

NICENE CREED

Living together in trust and hope, let us confess our faith.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

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.**

COMMUNION PRAYER

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

We sit.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*We receive communion this morning at the head of the center aisle.
We commune by intinction. Hold your bread to dip in the chalice of wine.
You may return to your seat by the side aisles.*

We remain seated.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We stand.

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN # 239

Hark, the Glad Sound!

PEACE

We share the Peace of Christ with one another as we depart.

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+ SERVING IN WORSHIP THIS MORNING +

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Director of Music
Assisting Minister

Pastor Nathan Gragg
Julie Branham
Janice Sult



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