

Advent 3

The Prayers of Advent: Looking Around Us



This Sunday we celebrate the Third Week in Advent, from the old Latin “Gaudate” which means to rejoice. While a Latin term, it is meant to reflect the joy and rejoicing that occurs when one reflects upon the majesty of the gift of the Baby Jesus.

We also hear about John the Baptist, now in prison, and wondering really what is going on.

He has done His job of testifying about the coming Savior, but finds himself imprisoned by Herod’s treachery. Now Jesus wants to send word to him about all that is going on.

John had heard the stories. He sent his followers to ask Jesus, “Are you the one?” Jesus instructs them to return to John and share with them the things that they have seen- the miracles, the power, the unexplained greatness of what all was going on. It was the evidence John would need to know the truth about Jesus.

John probably expected better after doing all of the hard work out in the wilderness. From the brightness of the limelight to the darkness of a jail cell, he now reaches out to Jesus to find out if he is “the One.” I suppose in a unique turn of events, Jesus sends John’s followers back with stories and with an interesting thought- John, you decide, based on what you see and hear, if Jesus is “the One.”

This certainly is an interesting text for a Sunday based on joy. Maybe that is the way God’s work is at times. Truly bigger than our current circumstances, calling each one of us to a new understanding, that joy is complete only outside of our present circumstances, when we find ourselves standing in the very presence of God.

Pastor Jonathon Kosec

OUR WORSHIP TODAY

GATHERING AND MEDITATION TIME

Welcome Books, Prayer Requests, Praise Reports and Announcements

CONFSSIONAL PRAYER

Pastor: In this season of Advent, our senses will be overwhelmed and we will be bombarded with all manner of distractions that will work against our true observance of the significance of the season. We will find ourselves being more concerned about less important things, and we will neglect the things that we should truly be about. This morning, we realize the difficulties that we face, and the poor job we have done with our response to the Word of God. For that, dear Lord, we make our confession to you this day.

ALL: 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 the things 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

ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Our Lord hears our prayers this day, and has offered to give us the grace of forgiveness. As a result of the love of God, the work of Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Go and sin no more, that the rest of your life might be pure and holy and modeled after our Lord Jesus in all we say and all we do, we pray and celebrate this morning in His Holy Name, **Amen.**

HYMN 90 "O Come, All Ye Faithful" 1,3,5

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY (Unison): 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.

Alleluia. I am sending my messenger before you, who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia.

SPECIAL MUSIC "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" Dean Carson

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 35: 1-10

New Living Translation (NLT)

Even the wilderness and desert will be glad in those days. The wasteland will rejoice and blossom with spring crocuses. Yes, there will be an abundance of flowers and singing and joy! The deserts will become as green as the mountains of Lebanon, as lovely as Mount Carmel or the plain of Sharon. There the Lord will display his glory, the splendor of our God.

With this news, strengthen those who have tired hands, and encourage those who have weak knees. Say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, and do not fear, for your God is coming to destroy your enemies. He is coming to save you." And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf.

The lame will leap like a deer and those who cannot speak will sing for joy! Springs will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams will water the wasteland. The parched ground will become a pool, and springs of water will satisfy the thirsty land. Marsh grass and reeds and rushes will flourish where desert jackals once lived. And a great road will go through that once deserted land. It will be named the Highway of Holiness.

Evil-minded people will never travel on it. It will be only for those who walk in God's nor any other ferocious beasts. There will be no other dangers. Only the redeemed will walk on it. They will enter Jerusalem singing, crowned with everlasting joy. Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be filled with joy and gladness.

THE SECOND LESSON: James 5:7-10

New Living Translation (NLT)

Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.

Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door!

For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

New Living Translation (NLT)

John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, “Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting or should we keep looking for someone else?”

Jesus told them, “Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen—the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.” And he added, “God blesses those who do not fall away because of me.”

As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began talking about him to the crowds. “What kind of man did you go into the wilderness to see? Was he a weak reed, swayed by every breath of wind? Or were you expecting to see a man dressed in expensive clothes? No, people with expensive clothes live in palaces. Were you looking for a prophet? Yes, and he is more than a prophet. John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say,

‘Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way before you. “I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is!

The Gospel of our Lord.

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST.

SERMON Advent Prayer: “Seeing Things Around Us”

Pastor Jonathon Kosec

SERMON HYMN: 92 “Joy to the World” 1,2,3

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH: The Apostles Creed (C)

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 Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. 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 Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE OFFERING:

After the consecration of the Offering, we will sing the Doxology:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, Praise him, all creatures here below, Praise him above, Ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

-PRAYERS OF PRAISE, WORDS OF INSTITUTION, LORD'S PRAYER

THE DISTRIBUTION

All are invited to come together around this table as those who belong to the household of Christ, brothers and sisters who in our baptized lives live out the death and resurrection of Jesus. The family of the reborn and the reconciled, who inhabit a universe of grace, are invited to share. It is our Lord's Table, you are welcomed here! Gluten free wafers are available, and non-alcoholic white grape juice is served on the inner rings of the communion tray.

THE DISTRIBUTION

THE COMMUNION BLESSING

HYMN 94 "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice 1,2,3

THE BENEDICTION & THE DISMISSAL

P. Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

C. **Thanks be to God**

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WELCOME TO OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN! Thank you for joining us as we worship our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We are happy you are here! As a kindness to one another, **please place your cell phones on muted** for the time we are together in worship. If you are a visitor, let us know you are here!

IN OUR PRAYERS: It is our joy and our privilege to share in these petitions to Almighty God. If you have them ready before the service, hand them to Pastor when you have them completed, otherwise Pastor will specifically ask for the requests, as well as any updates on prior prayer requests.

A FRIENDLY REMINDER: Our Sunday morning offering counters have a tough job each week, making sure the offering is counted and recorded in the perfectly correct manner. Interruptions make this almost an impossible task to complete. Please do not interrupt their work while they are doing it, so that they can get things done quickly and correctly. Thanks!

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PARADE! It was an awesome opportunity to share our story with others. We thank you for your help and all of your hard work.

OUR CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE: There will be a service on Christmas Eve, Saturday December 24th, at 6:00 PM. On Sunday, December 25th, Christmas Day, we will hold our regular Sunday worship service at 10:00 AM. Both services will be different and you are invited to bring family and friends to every service!

Our Savior Lutheran Church, LCMC

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Worship Time: Sunday 10 A.M.

Bible Study Twice Monthly, Wednesdays at 10:00 AM

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