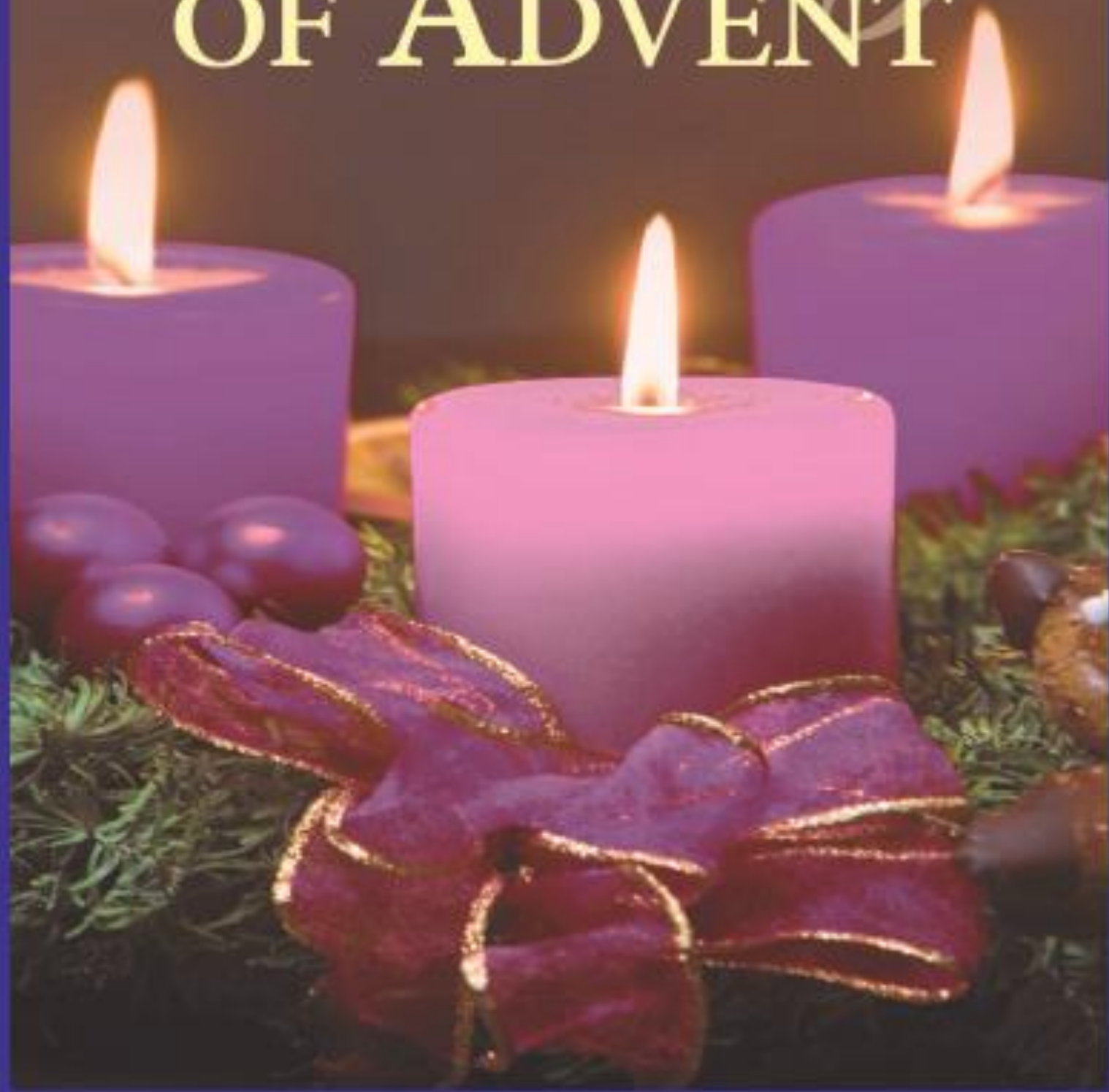


3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
OF ADVENT



## Welcome and Concerns of the Church

This week, we turn to Luke's writing, which is an account in two acts: the Gospel biography of Jesus and then the story of the early church—the "Jesus community." Whether you were a Jew or Gentile in those days, deciding to become a part of this illegal early Christian movement could bring punishment for your allegiance. Surely the message in both Luke and Isaiah that the downcast, lowly, and oppressed would rise up is a welcome and inspirational account. Like the Jewish exiled people of Isaiah's time and like the early Christians, we also sometimes wonder where God is in our suffering. We long to hear the promise that a reason for joyful praise is the good news on the way!

### Lighting the Advent Wreath:

I believe in God, I believe in God,  
even when, even when God is silent.

I believe in God, I believe in God,  
even when, even when God is silent.

## Prayer of the Day

Holy One,

we thank you for the glimpses we catch  
of your gift of the depths of joy.

Even in the midst of fear,  
of challenge, of struggle—  
even when we are not sure

of your presence,  
ignite the flame of joy within us,

**All: ... that we might glow with its brilliance  
from the inside out.**

*Congregation joins the song]*

**I believe in God,  
I believe in God,  
even when... even when...  
God is silent.**

**I believe in love,  
I believe in love,  
even when... even when...  
I don't feel it.**

**I believe in the sun,  
I believe in the sun,  
even when... even when...  
it's not shining.**

*Pastor:* Help us face the silence of unknowing  
and embrace it as the pause before joyful new beginnings.  
**Amen.**

## **Children's Time to Shine**

### **First Reading: Isaiah 57.14-19** (*Common English Bible translation*)

It will be said: "Survey, survey; build a road!  
Remove barriers from my people's road!"  
The one who is high and lifted up,  
who lives forever, whose name is holy, says:  
I live on high, in holiness,  
and also with the crushed and the lowly,  
reviving the spirit of the lowly,  
reviving the heart of those who have been crushed.

I won't always accuse,  
nor will I be enraged forever.  
It is my own doing that their spirit is exhausted—  
I gave them breath!  
I was enraged about their illegal profits;  
I struck them; in rage I withdrew from them.  
Yet they went on wandering wherever they wanted.  
I have seen their ways, but I will heal them.  
I will guide them,  
and reward them with comfort.

And for those who mourn,  
I will create reason for praise:  
utter prosperity to those far and near,  
and I will heal them, says the Lord.

## **Psalm 126      A Harvest of Joy**      (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>1</sup> When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,<sup>[a]</sup>  
we were like those who dream.

<sup>2</sup> **Then our mouth was filled with laughter,  
and our tongue with shouts of joy;**  
then it was said among the nations,  
"The LORD has done great things for them."

<sup>3</sup> **The LORD has done great things for us,  
and we rejoiced.**

<sup>4</sup> Restore our fortunes, O LORD,  
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

<sup>5</sup> **May those who sow in tears  
reap with shouts of joy.**

<sup>6</sup> Those who go out weeping,  
bearing the seed for sowing,  
**shall come home with shouts of joy,  
carrying their sheaves.**

### **Gospel: Luke 1: 1-4; 26-56** (*Common English Bible translation*)

Many people have already applied themselves to the task of compiling an account of the events that have been fulfilled among us. They used what the original eyewitnesses and servants of the word handed down to us. Now, after having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, I have also decided to write a carefully ordered account for you, most honorable Theophilus. I want you to have confidence in the soundness of the instruction you have received...

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?"

The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled 'unable to conceive' is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God."

Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. With a loud voice she blurted out,

“God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry. Why do I have this honor, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. Happy is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill the promises he made to her.”

Mary said,

“With all my heart I glorify the Lord!

In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior.

He has looked with favor on the low status of his servant.

Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored  
because the mighty one has done great things for me.

Holy is his name.

He shows mercy to everyone,  
from one generation to the next,  
who honors him as God.

He has shown strength with his arm.

He has scattered those with arrogant thoughts and proud inclinations.

He has pulled the powerful down from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty-handed.

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,  
remembering his mercy,

just as he promised to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to Abraham’s descendants forever.”

Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her home.

The gospel of the Lord

**Thanks be to God!**

## Message

### Hymn of the Day “People Look East” 248 Eleanor Farjeon 1881-1965; Barry Rose 1934

Besancon 87 98 87

1. People look east. The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.  
make your house fair as you are able  
trim the hearth and set the table  
People look east and sing today  
Love the Guest, is on the way.

2. Furrows be glad. Though earth is bare  
One more seed is planted there  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish  
that in course the flow’r may flourish  
People look east and sing today  
Love the Rose, is on the way.

3. Stars keep the watch. When night is dim  
One more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather,  
Bright as sun and moon together  
People look east and sing today  
Love the Star, is on the way.

4. Angels announce with shouts of mirth  
him who brings new life to earth.  
Set ev'ry peak and valley humming  
with the word the Lord is coming.  
People look east and sing today.  
Love the Lord, is on the way.

## The Peace Announcements

*Altar flowers are given to the glory of God by Bob Cosgrove,  
in loving memory of his parents, Richard and Elsie Cosgrove,  
and his father's sister, Dorothy Watt.*

**We welcome Jacob Robert Tripp into the family of God through baptism later today. Jacob is the son of Steve and Chrissy (Kahler) Tripp.**

**The 2021 POP envelopes** have arrived and are now available. If you would like to receive yours by mail, please email the office with your preferred address Attention Donna Plouffe princeofpeacebrockton@gmail.com or [dplouffe16@gmail.com](mailto:dplouffe16@gmail.com) thank you very much!

**Special events and weekly opportunities to join us.**  
**Take the POP Candle Challenge. Here is the link -**  
[Candle Challenge - YouTube](#)

**Blue Christmas Outside, so dress warm Dec. 21 at 7 PM:** This year has brought loss to many of us. Nothing is as it was before. On the longest night, we will gather to commemorate and lift up what has weighed us down. It will be a beautiful time to remember the one who speaks light in every darkness.

**Christmas Eve 4PM Carols and the Christmas Story** Both will be live streamed on Facebook or Join us outside around the trees!

**Bible study on Wednesday 10 am** Live or taped on our facebook page.

**“New” Thirsty Thursday video** also on facebook. Send in your pics by Tuesday check in for the theme of the week.

## Prayers of Intercession

God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world.  
Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*A brief silence*

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news, Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship. Embed your word in their hearts.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery effort.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people, who turn to us in time of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered*

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified your radiant love. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

### Blessing

May the creator of the stars of light fill you with hope,  
The long expected Savior bless your Advent waiting with love,  
And the unexpected Spirit guide your journey through these days.  
And the Messenger of the Most High says, "Be not afraid!"

**Amen.**

## Hymn: Introduction

**“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”** 836 Henry van Dyke 1852-1922; Ludwig van Beethoven 1770-1827;

Hymn to Joy 87 87D

1. Joyful, joyful we adore thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love!  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,  
Praising thee their sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
Drive the gloom of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness  
Fill us with the light of day.

2. All thy works with joy surround thee,  
earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,  
stars and angels sing around thee  
center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain  
Flow'ry meadow flashing sea,  
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain  
Call us to rejoice in thee!

3. Thou art giving and forgiving,  
Ever blessing ever blest  
well spring of the joy of living  
Ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our brother  
All who live in love are thine;  
Teach us how to love each other  
Lift us to the joy divine!

4. Throw off now the chains of ancient  
bitterness and enmity.  
Hand in hand let's walk together  
on the path of liberty.  
Hark...a new dawn is breaking;  
raise your voices now as one.  
Furnish every heart with joy,  
banish hatred now for good.

## Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Thanks for joining us!

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