St. Peter's Lutheran Church 3rd Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023 - 8:45 AM

4 Gathering 4

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

We are awaiting the coming of Jesus at the glorious Day of the Lord.

We wait with Mary in hope, with confident faith, and in the joy of expectation.

Let us enter the presence of God in holy reverence.



Prepare now to give thanks to God: Place an envelope in the offering plate on the way to Communion *or* use the QR code *or* download the Vanco Mobile app on your smart phone. Search on "York" and choose St Peter's Lutheran. It's easy! Give thanks generously for God's abundant grace.

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

Confession & Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins

In the name of the Father, and of the \pm Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

Lord Jesus, you are the promised Messiah, anointed to save God's people. Lord, have mercy. **C: Forgive us when we look to others for what you alone give. Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you bring the kingdom of God to us and call us to repentance. Christ, have mercy. **C: Forgive us when we do not seek God's rule over our lives. Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are the Redeemer proclaimed by the prophets. Lord, have mercy. **C**: Forgive us when we do not heed God's Word spoken to us. Lord, have mercy.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake, God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to each of you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the \pm Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen**

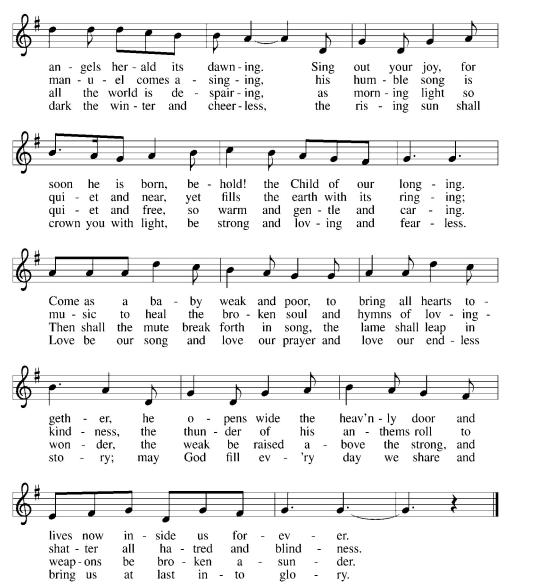
Apostolic Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

Hymn Of Praise #633 Blue

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn





Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen
Text and music © 1983 GIA Publications. Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638, www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
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Prayer of the Day

Lord be with you. C: And also with you.

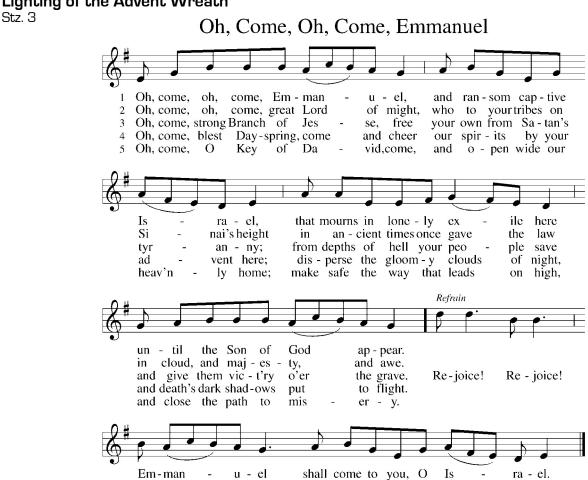
A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Let us pray, Almighty God, you once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us, your people, the wisdom to see your purpose

today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen**

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath



Third Sunday of Advent

Use this blessing when lighting the third candle.

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and make sorrow and sighing flee away. Give us strength and patience to trust you to be true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer, with your wonders near at hand. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.**

+ Word +

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

God engages us in holy conversation – speaking and listening

Let us open our ears and hearts to hear God's voice in the words spoken to us.

First Reading — *Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

A reading from Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord GoD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to provide for those who mourn in Zion-to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love I all the nations.

justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. 10 will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. "For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before

The Word of the Lord. **C**: **Thanks be to God**.

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the for- tunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth I filled with laughter, and our tongue with I shouts of joy.

Then they said a-1 mong the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

⁴The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

⁵Restore our for-'tunes, O LORD, like the watercourses' of the Negev.

[®]Those who 'sowed with tears will reap with 'songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, carry-'ing the seed, will come again with joy, shoulder-'ing their sheaves.

Second Reading — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from 1 Thessalonians

¹⁸Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁸Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is

good; ²² abstain from every form of evil. ²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation #168 ELW

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

The cantor will sing the alleluia once alone and then the congregation repeats it.



Alleluia. I am sending my messen- ger before you, * who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia. (Matt. 11:10)

Holy Gospel — John 1:6-8, 19-28

The Gospel According to St. John

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you

say about yourself?" ²³He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

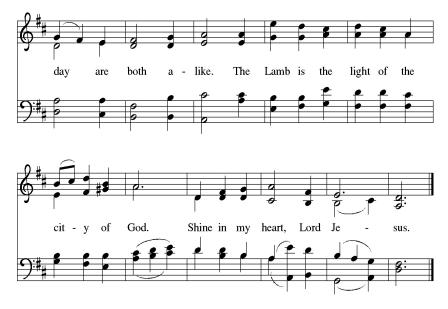
The Message

The assembly is seated. Silence for reflection follows the sermon. The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.

Hymn Of the Day #649 Blue

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light





Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934 Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration.

Nicene Creed

Together with the whole church, let us confess our faith:

- C: 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; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.

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.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He 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.

Prayer of the Church

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers to the Father for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy as we bear witness to the great things you have done. Give your church a spirit of gladness as we gather and as we are sent back into the world. Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

Protect forests, orchards, rainforests, and all wooded areas from disease and deforestation. Keep us grateful for the gifts of oxygen, food, shade, and shelter that trees provide. Merciful God, **C**: receive our prayer.

Grant your justice and favor to those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, and incarcerated. Give wisdom and compassion to those who work for public safety and all who work within prisons, jails, and courts, that mercy may increase and violence wither away. Merciful God, C: receive our praver.

Give us strength to pray for our world without ceasing and provoke us toward love and good deeds for all who are in need, especially those we name now.... (pause)...... Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care. Empower us as helpers and advocates. Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

Open our hearts to those who serve as truth-tellers in our church and in our society. Bless leaders in church and society in their task of proclaiming the truth of your Word. Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

Accept our thanks as we rejoice in the saints who witnessed to your life in all circumstances, in whom your Spirit was not quenched, even in death. Through them, teach us always to hold fast to what is good as we wait for the day when joy will be complete. Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. C: Amen.

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, God does not hold our sins against us. This is true peace. Like Jesus with his disciples, the pastor shares the word of reconciliation from God to us.

The peace of the Lord be with you always. C: And also with you.

We share Christ's forgiving and reconciling love with one another, binding ourselves to one another as community. As we are at peace with God, so we are also at peace with one another.

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING - WE RETURN THANKS TO GOD AND SUPPORT GOSPEL MINISTRY



Please prepare your offering in an envelope to place in the offering plate when you are dismissed for Communion **Or** use the QR code or download the Vanco Mobile app on your phone. You may also mail your offering to the church office or give through our website www.stpeterslutheranyork.com Also be sure you have filled out the attendance card.

Everything we are and have belongs to God and is entrusted to us for God's glory. We are committed to sharing God's resources so that we can be a vital center for the Gospel of Jesus Christ and help others locally and around the world.

The Great Thanksgiving - The Eucharistic Meal

As the baptized children of God, we are invited by God to share the heavenly banquet. Jesus seats us at his table where we are delivered from sin, death, and evil by his body and blood from his death on the cross. In this meal, Jesus forgives our sins, granting us life and salvation. He is truly present here and reveals himself to us in the breaking of bread. When we share Jesus' meal, we receive the Holy Spirit to live in hope and joy.

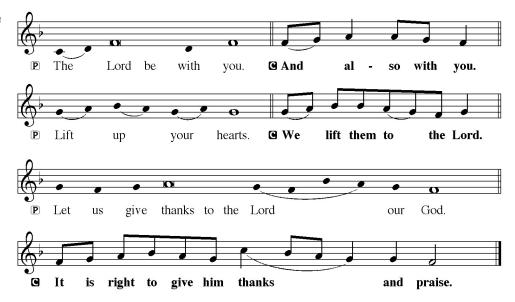
The ministers make ready the bread and wine

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray.

Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. **C: Amen.**

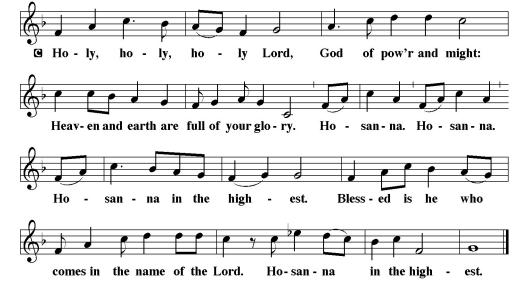
Dialogue



Preface

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and ever living God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:





Eucharistic Prayer

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will. He is your Word, inseparable from you. Through him you created all things, and in him you take delight. He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.

It is he, our Lord Jesus, who fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

It is he who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said: Take and eat; this is my body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This is my blood poured out for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: **C: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we lift this bread and cup before you, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people. And we ask you: Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your Church; gather into one all who share this bread and cup; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ. Through him all glory and honor are yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church both now and forever. **C: Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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

Fraction - The Breaking of the Bread

The Body of Christ is broken as he was broken for us in the Passover, in the loaves, and on the cross. He gives himself to us as he fed the multitudes. Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb who gave himself to deliver all people from slavery to sin and He is the heavenly Bridegroom who welcomes the Church as His beautiful bride.

Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, Emmanuel, who has come to save you.

C: Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Distribution

The pastor will commune. and then commune those with impaired mobility in the pew. Then the ushers will dismiss you from the center aisle to come forward, place your offering in the receptacle, and receive the wafer in your open palm from the pastor. Hold the host with your fingers.

The body of Christ, given for you.

Then proceed to the assisting minister to dip the host carefully into the blood of Christ.

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **C: Amen.**

Return to your seat by the side aisle. Give thanks to God for such grace!

Post Communion Blessing

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray. Almighty God, in the Body and Blood of your Son, you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourish us by this life-giving meal, and send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. **C: Amen.**

♣ Sending +

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.
Go! Messiah is coming!

free!

Benediction

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. In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. C: Amen.

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers Sending Hymn #25 Green Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear; The watch-ers on the moun-tain pro-claim the bride-groom near; The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'rings bore, Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear; ad - vanc - ing, and eve-ning is the dark - er night is near. 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. longed for, o'er rise, O Sun so this be - night-ed sphere. bride-groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw-ing mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen A - round the throne of glo - ry the With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we Lamb they shall be - hold; plead, O Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry. rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride-groom is at tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple hand. gold.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is near. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

The Altar Greens are given to the glory of God.

The Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God, by Shelva Gise.

Council Meeting — Tuesday, DECEMBER 19, 7:00 PM

*Blue Christmas Service—Thursday, DECEMBER 21, *6:30 PM [rescheduled]

Hand Bells Rehearsal — Thursdays, DECEMBER 21, *7:30 PM

DECEMBER 10, 2023 OFFERING

General \$ 1,680.25 Capital Improvement \$ 50.00 Masonry \$ 20.00 HVAC \$ 85.00 Parish Visitor \$ 20.00 Christmas — 100.00 Eternal Candle \$ 10.00

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CHRISTMAS EVENTS

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE*

Thursday, DECEMBER 21, 6:30 PM St. Peter's Lutheran [rescheduled] *A service of healing and remembrance.*





CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Sunday, DECEMBER 24 3:30 PM — St. Peter's Lutheran

7:00 PM — Christ, Manchester 10:00 PM — St. Peter's Lutheran

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Monday, DECEMBER 25 10:00 AM [NO 8:45am service] St. Peter's Lutheran

POTLUCK BRUNCH PARTY AFTER SERVICE

1st Sunday of Christmas Sunday, DECEMBER 31, 10:30 AM St. Peter's Lutheran Carol singing following to follow.

EPIPHANY WORSHIP

Sundays, JANUARY 7 thru FEBRUARY 11

At St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York **8:00 AM** – Early Service [No 8:45 AM service at St. Peter's]

At Christ Lutheran, Manchester — 10:30 AM

*Ash Wednesday Service, 3:30 PM — at St. Peter's

* *Sunday, FEBRUARY 18 — Worship will resume at St. Peter's Lutheran



God Has a Mission!

As disciples and stewards of Jesus Christ, we, the members of St. Peter's Lutheran Church are committed to the preaching § teaching of the Word of God to all people. We will reach out to one another and to others, giving and receiving, in worship, fellowship, and witness to Jesus Christ!

MEMBERS & FRIENDS

Susan Becker—Tom Brusan—Janice Cromer—Rich Davis—Don Gise—Shelva Gise—Bruce Harget—Cheryl Hibner—Samantha Hilker—Ken Humphreys—Marsha Humphreys—Lori Joseph—Shirley Lutz—Ron Malehorn—Michele McFarland—Philip Michael—Brenda Croumer Miller—Pr Judy McKee—Charlie Neff—Rowan Neff—Scott Neff—Kathy Pugh—Dolores Rehmeyer—Betty Roach—Donna Roach—Bill & Rachel Sanders—Nancy Stough Miller—James Thompson—Vickie Toomey—Matthew Walters—Zach Weiland—Margaret Wiley—Dave Yates—Lois Yates—Stephen Young.

REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Donna Arnold—Norma Buck—Evelin Burgos—Bill Everhart—Don Everhart—Helen Everhart—Doris Hoffacker—Ken & Joyce Innerst—Carla & Mike Lehr—Jean Leiphart John Lehr—Joanne V. Martin—Marguerite Ness—Betty Roach—Lois Smith—Lois Snyder—Joyce Topper

St. Peter's Lutheran Church 947 North George Street, York PA 17404 8:45 AM—Worship Service

Church Staff

The Reverend Beth A. Schlegel, STS

Terri Schroll

Kristen Hartman—Susan Hartman

Sextons

Our phone number is: 717-854-0589

Our Website is: http://www.stpeterslutheranyork.org Our Email Address is: stpeterslutheran@verizon.net Pastor Beth Schlegel: Phone #: 717-495-8894

Email: pastorschlegel@live.com

This Week
CHURCH
OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Thursday 8:00 AM — 1:00 PM

Friday

OFFICE CLOSED