



Joy: The third Advent candle is called the **Shepherd's Candle** or **Joy Candle**. It is typically pink or rose-colored and represents the joy of the shepherds when they heard the news of Christ's birth, a theme celebrated on the third Sunday of Advent, known as Gaudete Sunday.

First Lutheran Church

December 14, 2025

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*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.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

REJOICE, REJOICE

David Lasky

Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn

(Please stand)

MORNING PRAYER

OPENING DIALOGUE AND DOXOLOGY

Leader: O Lord, o - pen my lips,

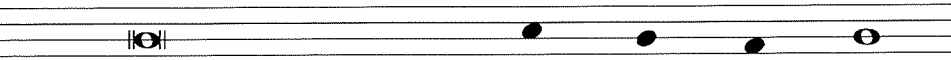
and my mouth shall pro - claim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it:

as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now,

and will be for - ev - er. A - men.

INVITATORY



Give glory to God, our *light and our life.*

MORNING PSALM OF PRAISE

PSALM 95:1-7

Musical score for the hymn "Come, Let Us Sing to the Lord". The score is written on two staves in G-clef (treble clef) and 4/4 time. The melody is in G major. The first staff contains the first line of the hymn: "Come, Let us sing to the Lord; let us shout for joy to the". The second staff contains the second line: "rock of our sal - va - tion." The melody is simple and suitable for children's voices. A triplet of eighth notes is marked in the first staff.

Come, Let us sing to the Lord; let us shout for joy to the
 rock of our sal - va - tion.

The Cantor will sing the verses.

FINAL INVITATORY

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

Oh, come, let us wor - ship and praise.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

P: At every beginning there is a yearning for the one who is coming.

L: O Emmanuel,

C: Open us up to your coming.

P: We gather together to allow our deeply held hopes to be reshaped by God's promises.

L: O Emmanuel,

C: Open us up to your coming.

P: We wait for the day when God will make for us a future that is no longer predicated on our fear.

L: O Emmanuel,

C: Open us up to your coming.

P: We find a new receptivity within us that desires God's will over our own will and relies on God's justice and mercy to accomplish it.

L: O Emmanuel,

C: Open us up to your coming.



Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.

Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.

Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is-ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.

He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.

Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.

P: Jesus, we welcome your presence now with the lighting of these candles, whose flames bring warmth to winter and fill this place with the glow of hope.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: 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.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

BELLS OF PRAISE

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

Savior of the Nations, Come

Jason W. Krug

++ Children may go to Sunday School

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.

L: A reading from Isaiah, the thirty-fifth chapter.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² 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.

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ 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."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

⁶ 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;

⁷ 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.

⁸ 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.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ 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.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

JAMES 5:7-10

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

R: A reading from James, the fifth chapter.

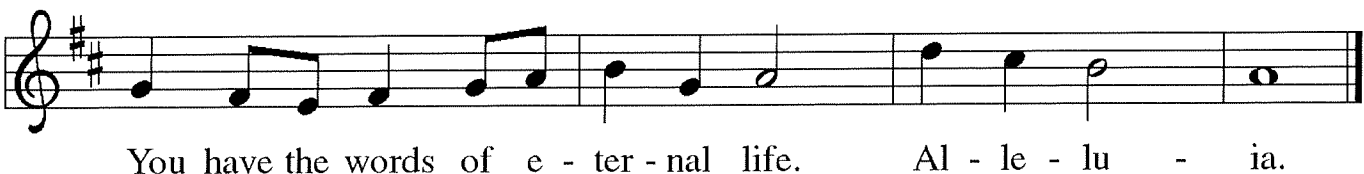
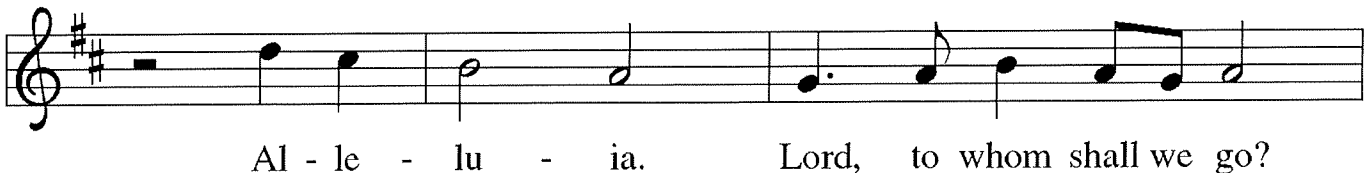
⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the second chapter.



² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ 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: ⁵ 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. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ⁷ 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? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ 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.' ¹¹ "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."

P: This is the gospel of our Lord.





1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

(Please be seated)

REFLECTION

REVEREND MARK SCHURING

(Please stand)

CANTICLE

BLESSED BE THE GOD OF ISRAEL

ELW # 250



1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el who comes to set us free
2 With prom-ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call,
3 My child, as proph-et of the Lord you will pre-pare the way,



and rais - es up new hope for us: a Branch from Da-vid's tree.
the oath once sworn to A - bra-ham, from foes to save us all;
to tell God's peo - ple they are saved from sin's e - ter - nal sway.



So have the proph-ets long de-clared that with a might-y arm
that we might wor - ship with-out fear and of - fer lives of praise,
Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine forth and nev - er cease



God would turn back our en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.
in ho - li - ness and righ - teous-ness to serve God all our days.
to drive a - way the gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944, based on Luke 1:68-79
Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune

(Please be seated)

BAPTISM

PRESENTATION

P: God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

(Please stand)

P: People of God, do you promise to support *Rudy Olive Blue Daniel* and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

C: **We do.**

PROFESSION OF FAITH

P: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

P: Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

C: **I renounce them.**

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

C: **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C: **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 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.

P: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C: **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.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: Blessed are you, O God, maker and ruler of all things. Your voice thundered over the waters at creation. You water the mountains and send springs into the valleys to refresh and satisfy all living things. Through the waters of the flood you carried those in the ark to safety. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery to freedom. In the wilderness you nourished them with water from the rock, and you brought them across the river Jordan to the promised land. By the baptism of his death and resurrection, your Son Jesus has carried us to safety and freedom. The floods shall not overwhelm us, and the deep shall not swallow us up, for Christ has brought us over to the land of promise. He sends us to make disciples, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Pour out your Holy Spirit; wash away sin in this cleansing water; clothe the baptized with Christ; and claim your daughters, no longer slave and free, no longer male and female, but one with all the baptized in Christ Jesus, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

(Please be seated)

BAPTISM

P: *Rudy Olive Blue Daniel*, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

WELCOME

P: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

P: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

C: **We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share:
join us in giving thanks and praise to God
and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.**

OFFERING AND ORGAN MEDITATION

BESANÇON

Robert A. Hobby

People, Look East

(Please stand)

OFFERING SONG

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST

ELW # 248



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

OFFERING PRAYER

L: Let us pray.

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

C: Amen.

(Please kneel)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: 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.

L: God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing.
Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation.

Each petition concludes:

P: God of grace,
C: hear our prayer.

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

(Please stand)

LORD'S PRAYER

P: 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.**

SENDING

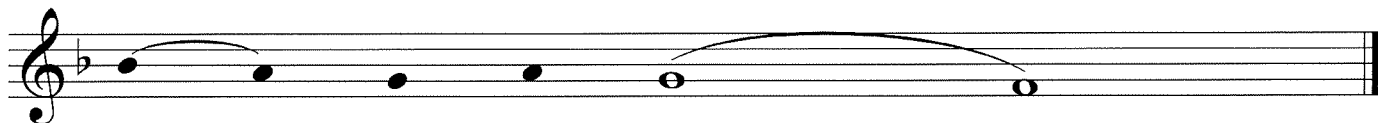
CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

C: Oh God,
your everlasting love for us is always trustworthy and sure.
We are grateful for the goodness you have shown us through the years,
and we ask now for confidence to go forward into the future.
Bless our community of faith, bless our healing,
bless the changes that are before us, bless our pastoral leaders
who will shepherd us through this time of transition.
We thank you now for the wisdom you will show us
as we align with your will, and servant or servants
you are already preparing to send us in your blessed time.
Help us to keep looking to you to define our ministry and our future.
In his name and for the sake of Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord, Amen.

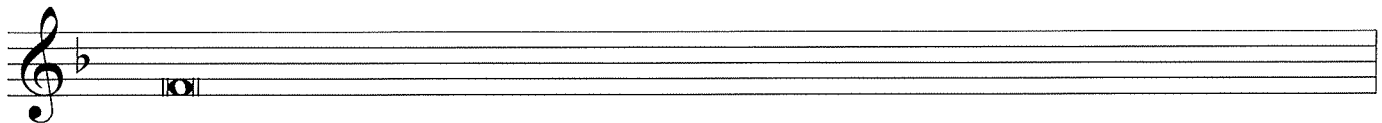
BLESSING



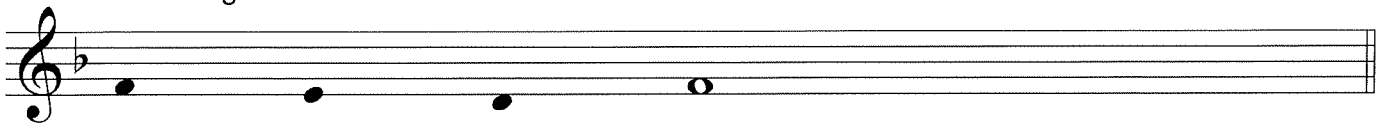
Presider: Let us bless the Lord.



Thanks be to God



*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 to*



day and al - ways.



A - - - - - men.



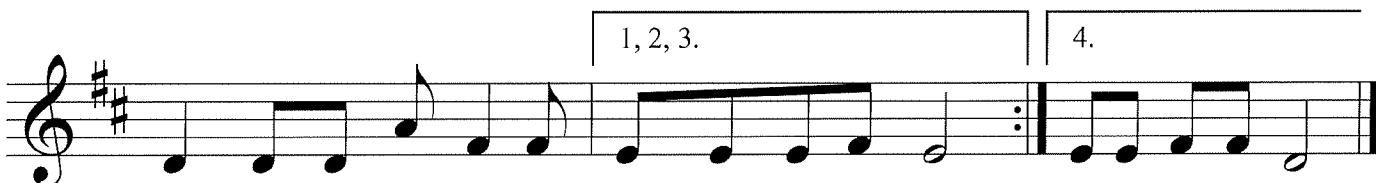
1. All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
 2. Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
 3. Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
 4. We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
 new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
 here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
 world; he is pre - sent, in neigh - bors we see our



God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
 clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
 Je - sus is with us, and

ev - er sets us free.

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace.

P: Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

BESANÇON

Michael Bedford

People, Look East

Celebration of Baptism

Today we celebrate the baptism of

Rudy Olive Blue Daniel

Daughter of

Sarah & Jacob Daniel



**Holy
Baptism**

Events in Review



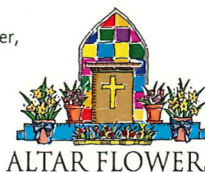
If you have a prayer request for today, please raise your hand during announcements and a host will give you a green card to fill out.

Boxed numbered donation envelopes were not ordered this year due to cost. However, we do have a lot left over from other years and if you would like to continue to use the personalized ones, please let the office know. For those who consistently used the numbered envelopes they can be picked up on the lobby table.



If you would like an End of Year Giving Statement. Please sign the Sheet on the Information Board or let the office know. Due to the amount of statements not picked up last year, these will not be automatically printed for everyone. We will be happy to print anyone that would like to have one.

This year we are starting a new procedure for ordering the Altar Flowers. We can no longer send out an invoice for payment reminder, so instead we are asking for payment using the new Altar Flower Envelopes.



- 1) Pick the date that you want to reserve as a dedication.
- 2) Write your name on the date you want to reserve on the small calendar.
- 3) Fill out the Altar Flower Envelope with the information requested and place money into envelope.
- 4) Return it with the offering collection or bring to the office and leave in basket.



Poinsettia Order forms for Christmas are available on the lobby table. Last day to have names printed in bulletin December 21

The Mitten Tree is up in the lobby and ready to receive donations.



December Monthly Scroll along with Jan-March 2025 Portals of Prayer are now available on the lobby table

Cookie Sign up sheets are located on the Information Board in the hallway. The time is before and after Church Service. Approximately 4 dozen cookies are needed each week.



Next Week

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Sunday</u> | Dec 21 |
| 10:00AM | Church Service |
| <u>Monday</u> | Dec 22 |
| 10:00AM | Bible Study at Willows |
| 5:15PM | Bell Choir Practice |
| <u>Tuesday</u> | Dec 23 |
| <u>Wednesday</u> | Dec 24 |
| 7:00 PM | Christmas Eve Service |
| <u>Thursday</u> | Dec 25 |
| | Christmas Day |
| <u>Friday</u> | Dec 26 |
| <u>Saturday</u> | Dec 27 |

Contact Us



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Our Worship Leaders

Altar Guild: Mike & Bonnie Oberlander

Cantor: Elijah Shiley

Facebook Camera

Host: Janet Zirger/Sharon Losey

Reader: Rick Greene

Worship Assistant Rick Greene

Director of Music: Curtis L. King

Minister: Pastor Mark Schuring

Emergency Pastors

Pastor Mark Schuring

(740) 360-2306

Mike Porter

(585) 813-5009

Pastor Philip Scherr

(814) 756-9435

Our Mission Statement

“God is among us!”

**“We are called to go out, care for all, share the gospel,
forgive, reconcile and trust God for all that we need.”**

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December 14, 2025