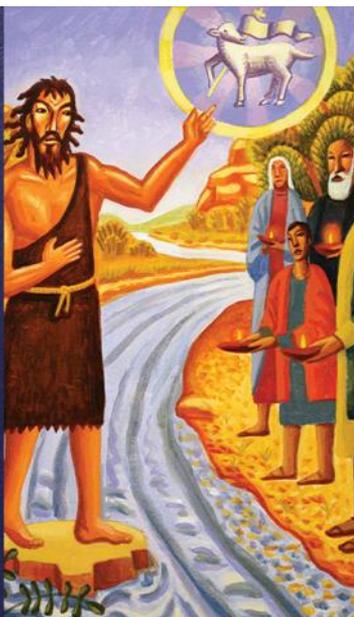


He will baptize
you with the
Holy Spirit
and fire

LUKE 3:16



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 12, 2021

MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
34 E. Orange Street
Shippensburg, PA 17257-1993
Web Site: memluth.org
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717-532-4614

Welcoming all
Reaching out in love
Growing together in Christ
Worshipping and serving in Jesus' name

The Rev. Dr. Christopher Suehr
717-532-4614 or 724-989-8106 or pastor@memluth.org
Office hours are Monday and Wednesday: 9:30 am - 2:00 pm
Tuesday and Thursday by appointment

Welcome to Memorial Lutheran Church. As you prepare for Worship, please silence your cell phone, complete the connection card and place it in the offering plate.

INTRODUCTION

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

GATHERING

Because the spread of Covid-19 is greatly increased by singing, there will be no singing of the liturgy or the hymns. Even in our silence the meaning of the hymn will be present to us.

WELCOME

PRELUDE "Comfort, Comfort These My People" - Burkhardt

Please kneel or sit

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God for whom we wait,

in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you. We fail in believing that your good news is for us. We falter in our call to tend your creation. We find our sense of self in material wealth. We fear those different from ourselves. We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, + your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

Amen.

Please stand

*The organist will play the hymn but we will not sing.
Please read the words as she plays.*

*Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior
promised long; let ev'ry heart
prepare a throne and ev'ry voice a song.*

*He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's
bondage held. The gates of brass
before him burst, the iron fetters yield.*

*He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding
soul to cure, and with the treasures
of his grace to enrich the humble poor.*

*Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace, your welcome
shall proclaim, and heav'n's eternal
arches ring with your beloved name.*

GREETING

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

KYRIE

READ RESPONSIVELY

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen, amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated

WORD

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. ¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing ¹⁸as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Blessed are you, God of might and majesty, for you promise to make the desert rejoice and blossom, to watch over the strangers, and to set the prisoners free.

As we light these candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus.

O ransomed people of the Lord, come,
let us travel on God's holy way and enter into Zion with singing.
Amen.

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING HYMN: Advent 3

ELW 240 vs. 1, 2 & 3

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"

*The organist will play the hymn but we will not be singing.
Please read the words as she plays.*

*Light one candle to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He shall bring salvation to Israel, God fulfills the promise.*

*Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.*

*Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.*

PSALM **Isaiah 12:2-6** **READ RESPONSIVELY**

²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become
my salvation.

³**With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.**

⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's
name; make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations;
proclaim that this name is exalted.

⁵**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.**

⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

SECOND READING

Philippians 4:4-7

*Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this
letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their
worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy
and peace.*

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your
gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry
about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with
thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace
of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and
your minds in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 3rd chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL

Luke 3:7-18

*John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches
that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing
fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.*

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." ¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

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

Please be seated

SERMON

Please stand

HYMN OF THE DAY *"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"*

ELW 242

*The organist will play the hymn but we will not sing.
Please read the words as she plays.*

*Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,
for angels herald its dawning. Sing out your joy, for
soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts
together, he opens wide the heav'nly door and
lives now inside us forever.*

*To us, to all in sorrow and fear,
Emmanuel comes a-singing, his humble song is
quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;*

*music to heal the broken soul and hymns of lovingkindness,
the thunder of his anthems roll to
shatter all hatred and blindness.*

*In darkest night his coming shall be, when
all the world is despairing, as morning light so
quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
wonder, the weak be raised above the strong, and
weapons be broken asunder.*

*Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though
dark the winter and cheerless, the rising sun shall
crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless
story; may God fill ev'ry day we share and
bring us at last into glory.*

NICENE CREED

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

A brief silence.

Holy God, renew your church and raise up leaders who announce your good news. Grant peace to congregations and seminarians in the midst of transition. Guide the work of candidacy and call committees. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Creating God, your Spirit brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Breathe life into us, that we are inspired to live in harmony with one another and the planet. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Shepherding God, you lead your people in paths of righteousness. Raise up prophets in our own day who warn against captivity to greed and point us to the freedom found in generosity. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Nurturing God, you come near in times of worry and need. Cradle us in your arms, that we trust you and are not afraid. Attend to any who are hungry, imprisoned, or ill this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Rejoicing God, you exult over us in singing. Enliven the song of this assembly and bless the ministry of church musicians (*especially*). With instruments and dance, join our voices to the song of all creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give you thanks for your servants who showed us your goodness and grace (*especially*). By the power of your Spirit, keep us steadfast in faith until we make our home with you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

(Everyone is to remain in their pew for the passing of the peace. To share the peace with someone sitting near you, share a slight bow, wave, or cross your arms with hands touching the opposite arm, a gesture of embrace.)

Please be seated

OFFERTORY

The Ushers will collect the offering

OFFERTORY DUET

“Lo, How a Rose“

Kathy Kerr, Nancy Fogelsanger

- Lani Smith

Please stand

MEAL

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray together.

God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. Amen.

THE 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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. 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 to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Read Together

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of

power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

(1 Corinthians 11:23b-25)

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

Please be seated

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

All are welcome at the Lord's table. Please come forward by the center aisle at the usher's direction. If you choose to have wine for communion, take an empty cup from the usher. If you prefer grape juice, receive a pre-filled cup at the altar. If you or a child has never received the sacrament, fold hands to receive a blessing instead. After receiving communion or a blessing, you may choose to remain at the altar for extra time in prayer. When you return to your pew do so by the side aisles. Please deposit the empty cup in the basket.

Please stand

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in eternal life. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together.

Most High God, you have come among us at this table. By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN "People Look East"

ELW 248

*The organist will play the hymn but we will not sing.
Please read the words as she plays.*

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

Please be seated

POSTLUDE "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

- Lasky

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God.

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