# December 17, 2023 Third Sunday of Advent

# FIRST READING. Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

(B)

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 broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners: to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God: to comfort all who mourn: to 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 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. I 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 all the nations.

### SECOND READING. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

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. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

## GOSPEL. John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He 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?'He said,

'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

"Make straight the way of the Lord" ',

as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?'John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

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### **Lighting the Advent Wreath**

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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 send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand. **Amen.** 

Light the second candle. Sing Hymn 240, verse 3

The lines of the Psalm printed in bold font are sung in unison to the tune of a familiar hymn. The lines in plain font are read by the leader.

### Psalm 85 Tune: 257 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Leader: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

Unto the Lord I lift my soul; I trust in God to make me whole.

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

My voice with joy is raised to sing:
"The Lord has done a wondrous thing!"

The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

Let all, on earth, his glory tell, The Holy One of Israel!

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, just as the rain brings water back to dry riverbeds.

Unto the Lord I lift my soul;

I trust in God to make me whole.

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

My voice with joy is raised to sing:

"The Lord has done a wondrous thing!"

Those who wept as they went out carrying the seed will come back singing for joy, carrying their sheaves.

Let all, the earth, his glory tell, The Holy One of Israel!

# Offering Prayer (read in unison) From Sundays & Seasons, © 2023 Augsburg Fortress

God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

### **Dates to Remember**

9:30 a.m. – Pickleball; contact Margaret for info
4:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve worship service. There is no Sunday
morning worship on Advent 4, December 24.
11:00 a.m. – Christmas Day Gathering

### **Year End Financial Appeal**

As we approach Advent and Christmas, we are asking for your support in reducing our deficit of approximately \$15,000. Recognizing that prices have increased, we hope that you can help as you are able. Donations can be made by December 31st in person, mailed to the Church at 57 Griffith St. Welland, ON L3B 4G6 or e-transferred to <a href="mailto:stmatts@cogeco.net">stmatts@cogeco.net</a>. If you have any questions, please contact us at <a href="mailto:stmatts@cogeco.net">stmatts@cogeco.net</a>.

A donation of any size would truly be appreciated.

**Social Ministry** needs your Christmas help as our funds are low, and we wish to give, as usual, to our Church members in need. If you wish to donate, please indicate Social Ministry and the amount on your envelope by Dec. 17. Many thanks!

## **Evangelical Lutheran Worship**

Prelude and Announcements

#### **GATHERING**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath pra	yer
Advent Candle Hymn	240, v 3
Prayer of the Day	

First Reading ......Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

#### **WORD**

Printed in bulletin	Psalm 1
ading 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	Second
clamationPage 124	Gospel
"Glory to you, O Lord."	
John 1:6-8, 19-28	Gospel
"Praise to you, O Christ."	
	Sermon
he Day 241 O Lord, How Shall	Hymn o
l Meet You	
Intercession	Prayers
ponse"receive our prayer."	Prayer I
(non-contact gestures)	Peace

#### MEAL

Offering Prayer
Great Thanksgiving (spoken)Page 129
Eucharistic Prayer
"Holy, holy, holy"Page 130
The Lord's PrayerPage 134
Communion
"Lamb of God"Page 135
Communion Hymns528 (3x), 253, 256
Prayer after Communion

#### SENDING Placeing

Diessing	
Sending Song	. 593 Drawn to the Light
Dismissal: Go in pead	ce. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.