

FIRST READING Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The 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. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: “Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The 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 as on a day of festival. ”I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I 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. At 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.

SECOND READING Philippians 4:4-7

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

Gospel Luke 3:7-18

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and 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. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” 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.” As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 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 strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 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.” So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible Copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA.



**Sunday December 15, 2024 @ 11:00 am**

“In response to God’s love, St. Matthew’s is a faith community welcoming all to grow in faith, to worship Christ and to reach out to everyone.

**Welcome!** We hope our worship will be a blessing to you. Our Lord’s Supper is being celebrated today. Everyone is welcome to receive this Holy Sacrament.

**Order of Worship** Today’s Order of Worship and hymns are both located in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship.

**If you missed last week’s sermon, it is available on our website.**

**St. Matthew’s Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
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Church Secretary: Rona Devreese.....  
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Organist: Lily Jasinskaskas

**All Sing: Hark the Glad song the Saviour comes, the Saviour promised long. Let every heart prepare a throne and every voice a song.**

Leader: Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and will not be afraid, for the Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.” With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say on that day:

**All: “Give thanks to the Lord; call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.**

Leader: Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.

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

**All Sing: Our Glad hos-san-nas, the Prince of Peace your welcome shall proclaim and heav’ns eternal arches ring with your beloved name.**

**Prayer for Lighting of the Advent Candle:**

Leader: “We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ’s advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts

**ALL: as we await the Lord’s coming in glory.**

Leader: Enlighten us with your grace,

**ALL: that we serve our neighbors in need.**

Leader: Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day is near.

Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Our Lord’s contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of our Lord in word and supper. From *Sundays & Seasons, copyright @2021 Augsburg Fortress.*

**Upcoming Dates and Things to Remember**

Please take a copy of our November newsletter to friends who do not

have email.

**Social Ministry Christmas Giving:**

If you would like to donate to our Christmas monetary gifts for our congregational members in need, please use your regular envelope and mark it Social Ministry. Please give your donation by Sunday, December the 15th and, if you have any questions, contact Carole McLeod..

Tuesday December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Service 7pm.  
Wednesday December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day Service 11am.

November council minutes are now posted in the Church office.

Next Church Council Meeting is Sunday January 19th, after the Service.

Our Annual General Meeting will be Sunday, Feb. 2nd, 2025, after the Church Service.

**Evangelical Lutheran Worship**  
Holy Communion Setting 4 Page 203

**GATHERING**

Silent Reflection: “Where do you see God strengthening the Church and us this season?”

Prayer for Lighting of the Advent Candle

Music by AcaciaWood

**WORD**

First Reading.....Zephaniah 3:14-20

Psalmody Isaiah .....12:2-6

Second Reading.....Philippians 4:4-7 Music by AcaciaWood

Gospel Acclamation

**All: Alleluia, Alleluia.**

*Presider: I am sending my messenger before you, who will prepare your way before you.*  
***All: Alleluia, Alleluia.***

Gospel.....Luke 3:7-18  
Sermon  
Music by Acaciawood  
Prayers of Intercession  
Sharing the Peace

**MEAL**  
Great Thanksgiving.....ELW.....Page 152  
Holy, Holy, Holy.....ELW.....Page 153  
Eucharistic Prayer  
The Lord's Prayer.....ELW.....Page 154  
Music by Acaciawood  
Communion Hymns.....528, 253, 248  
Prayer after Communion

**SENDING**  
Announcements  
Blessing  
Music by Acaciawood  
Dismissal

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