

# Desiring the One Promised to Come

December 17,  
2023



Third Sunday of  
Advent

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**WELCOME, GUESTS!!!** We are so glad you came! If you have any questions or would like more information about our church, any member of Grace would be happy to speak with you. Please take the time to fill out a guest register at the church's entrance. Restrooms are located to the left as you exit the sanctuary. Congregational responses are indicated by indent and boldened letters.

**THEME FOR TODAY'S READINGS** – Most people don't want the Savior who promised to come. Do you?

**MORNING PRAYER** - Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**ADVENT SEASON** –Jesus came to accomplish our redemption. He comes today in the means of grace to distribute salvation, and he will come again on the last day with our resurrection. The candle lighting focuses our attention on Jesus, our brother, and the light of the world.

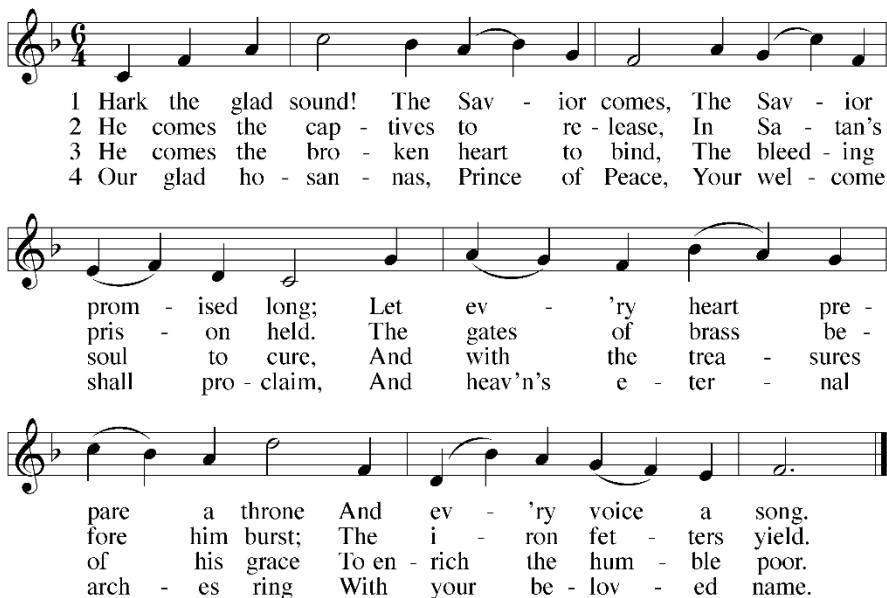
The advent candles are set on an octagon, the eighth day when Christ arose. Each of the four candles represents a thousand years from the promise to the fulfillment of the prophecy. Each of the four candles represents a thousand years from the promise to the fulfillment of the prophecy. The third candle is the "Shepherds Candle" this is the pink candle reminding us of the shepherd's joy.

**ORDER FOR TODAY'S SERVICE:** COMMON WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION– CW, p.15

## OPENING HYMN:

#12

HARK THE GLAD SOUND! THE SAVIOR COMES\*\*Please Stand for The Last Verse\*\*



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior  
 2 He comes the cap - tives to re - lease, In Sa - tan's  
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, The bleed - ing  
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, Your wel - come

prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre -  
 pris - on held. The gates of brass be -  
 soul to cure, And with the trea - sures  
 shall pro - claim, And heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.  
 fore him burst; The i - ron fet - ters yield.  
 of his grace To en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
 arch - es ring With your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–51, abr., alt.  
 Tune: CHESTERFIELD (CM) Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820, alt.



C: A - men.

In the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.

### CONFESSION OF SINS

Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this, I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. Amen.**

### LORD, HAVE MERCY

KYRIE



C: Lord, have mer - cy on us. Christ, have mer - cy



God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.



## PRAYER AND PRAISE

In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

## GLORY BE TO GOD

*GLORIA IN EXCELSIS*

C: Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

We praise you, we bless you, we wor-ship you, we glorify you,

we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,

God the Fa-ther al - mighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the

sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the

sin of the world; re - ceive our prayer. You sit at the right hand of

God the Father; have mercy on us. For you on-ly are holy;



### PRAYER OF THE DAY



The Lord be with you.

Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**\*\*Please Be Seated\*\***

### FIRST LESSON:

### Isaiah 61: 1 – 3, 10, 11

*It is an astonishing thing that so many are not satisfied with the salvation that God provides in the coming Christ, the Christ proclaimed by faithful forerunners. For that salvation is like gold compared to the tinsel that so many favor instead.*

***The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the afflicted. He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, you proclaim freedom for the captives and release for those who are bound, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance for our God, to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn in Zion, to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, a cloak of praise instead of a faint spirit, so that they will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord to display his beauty.***

***I will rejoice greatly in the Lord. My soul will celebrate because of my God, for he has clothed me in garments of salvation. With a robe of righteousness he covered me, like a bridegroom who wears a beautiful headdress like a priest, and like a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.***

***For as the earth produces its growth, and as a garden causes what has been sown to sprout up, so God the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up in the presence of all the nations.***

*Refrain*

Bless-ed are they who hope, who hope in the Lord.

*Psalm tone**Refrain*

In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge;<sup>\*</sup>  
 let me never be put to shame.  
 Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness;<sup>\*</sup>  
 turn your ear to me and save me.  
 Be my rock of refuge to which I can always go;<sup>\*</sup>  
 For you are my rock and my fortress.

*Refrain*

Since my youth, O God, you have taught me,<sup>\*</sup>  
 and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.  
 Even when I am old and gray,<sup>\*</sup>  
 do not forsake me, O God,  
 till I declare your power to the next generation,<sup>\*</sup>  
 your might to all who are to come.  
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son<sup>\*</sup>**  
**and to the Holy Spirit,**  
**as it was in the beginning,<sup>\*</sup>**  
**is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*Refrain*

## SECOND LESSON

## 1 THESSALONIANS 5: 16 – 24

*Cherish the message that comes from God's Word. Wrapped in that message are the most beautiful of Christmas presents, bought by Christ and carried to us by the Holy Spirit. The message prepares you for the real Christmas and for the real joy that God wants you to have in.*

***Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not extinguish the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt. But test everything. Hold on to the good. Keep away from every kind of evil.***

***May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.***

### VERSE OF THE DAY

Alleluia. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia.  
(Matthew 11:10 cf. NIV)



### GOSPEL

### JOHN 1: 6 – 8, 19 – 28

*John was God’s spokesman called to prepare the people for the Savior who comes in grace and in judgment. Especially those who came to question him should have known that. For everything that he said and did was in complete agreement with the Word of God.*

*After the announcement of the Gospel, the congregation sings:*



***There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.***

***This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who are you?”***

***He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, “I am not the Christ.”***

***And they asked him, “Who are you then? Are you Elijah?”***

***He said, “I am not.”***

***“Are you the Prophet?” “No,” he answered.***

***Then they asked him, “Who are you? Tell us so we can give an answer to 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,’ just as Isaiah the prophet said.” They had been sent from the Pharisees. So they asked John, “Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?”***

***These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.***

## NICENE CREED

**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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. 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, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian 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.**

***\*\*Please Be Seated\*\****

**HYMN OF THE DAY:**  
**ARISE, O CHRISTIAN PEOPLE**

**#14**

1 A - rise, O Chris - tian peo - ple! Pre -  
 2 Pre - pare the way be - fore him; Pre -  
 3 The hum - ble heart and low - ly God  
 4 Pre - pare my heart, Lord Je - sus; Turn

pare your - selves to - day. Pre - pare to greet the  
 pare for him the best. Cast out what would of -  
 rais - es up on high; Be - neath his feet in -  
 not from me a - side, And help me to re -

Sav - ior, Who takes your sins a - way. To  
 fend him, This great, this heav'n - ly guest. Make  
 ter - ror, The haugh - ty soul shall lie. The  
 ceive you This bless - ed Ad - vent - tide. From

us by grace a - lone The truth and  
 straight, make plain the way: The low - ly  
 heart sin - cere and right, That heeds God's  
 stall and man - ger low Come now to

light were giv - en; The prom - ised Lord from  
 val - leys rais - ing, The heights of pride a -  
 in - vi - ta - tion And makes true prep - a -  
 dwell with - in me; I'll sing your prais - es

heav - en To all the world is shown.  
 bas - ing, His path all e - ven lay.  
 ra - tion— It is the Lord's de - light.  
 glad - ly And forth your glo - ry show.

Text: Valentin Thilo, 1607–62, alt.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, st. 1-3, alt.; *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941, st. 4, alt.

Tune: AUS MEINES HERZENS GRUNDE (76 76 67 76) *New Catechismus Gesangbüchlein*, Hamburg, 1598, alt.



## SERMON TEXT

JOHN 1: 6 – 8, 19 – 28

## SERMON:

HIDDEN BY EXPECTATIONS; REVEALED BY FAITH

### CREATE IN ME

C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from your pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of your sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it. A - men.

*\*\*Please Be Seated\*\**

**OFFERING** – Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 9: 7: “Each one should give as he has determined in his heart, not reluctantly or under pressure, for God loves a cheerful giver.” This service is our gift to our guests; should you feel obliged to give, we thank you for your generosity.

### ADVENT PRAYER

Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent’s head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior.

**We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.

**Move us to take to heart the words of John: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”**

You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.

**Fill our lives with the message of your peace and the music of your grace.**

Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.

**Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.**

*Special prayers and intercessions may follow.*

Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

*Silent prayer.*

Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.

**Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

*\*\*Please Be Seated\*\**

### **DISTRIBUTION HYMN**

**JESUS, YOUR BLOOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS**

**#311**

**Vs. 1 – 5**



1 Soul, a - dorn your - self with glad - ness; Leave be - hind all  
2 Has - ten as a bride to meet him, And with lov - ing  
3 He who craves a pre - cious trea - sure Nei - ther cost nor  
4 Now I kneel be - fore you low - ly, Filled with joy most  
5 Hu - man rea - son, though it pon - ders, Can - not fath - om



gloom and sad - ness. Come in - to the day-light's splen - dor;  
rev - 'rence greet him, For with words of life im - mor - tal  
pain will mea - sure, But the price - less gifts of heav - en  
deep and ho - ly, As with trem - bling awe and won - der  
these great won - ders, That Christ's bod - y must be bound - less



There with joy your prais - es ren - der Un - to  
 He is knock - ing at your por - tal. O - pen  
 God to us has free - ly giv - en. Though the  
 On your might - y work I pon - der, How by  
 Since the souls it feeds are count - less, And that



him whose grace un - bound - ed Has this won - drous  
 wide the gates be - fore him, Say - ing, as you  
 wealth of earth were prof - fered, Naught would buy the  
 mys - ter - y sur - round - ed, Depths that no one  
 he his blood is giv - ing With the wine we



sup - per found - ed. Though he reigns a - bove most  
 there a - dore him: Grant, Lord, that I now re -  
 gifts here of - fered: Christ's true bod - y, for you  
 ev - er sound - ed. None may dare to pierce un -  
 are re - ceiv - ing. These great mys - ter - ies un -



ho - ly, Deigns to dwell with you most low - ly.  
 ceive you, That I nev - er - more will leave you.  
 riv - en, And his blood, for you once giv - en.  
 bid - den Se - crets that with you are hid - den.  
 sound - ed Are by God a - lone ex - pound - ed.

Text: Johann Franck, 1618–77, abr.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, st. 1-2, 4, alt.; *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941, st. 3, 5-6, alt.

Tune: SCHMÜCKE DICH (LM D Trochaic) Johann Crüger, 1598–1662, alt.

**\*\*Please Stand\*\***

## THE SACRAMENT



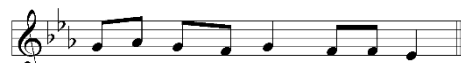
C: And al - so with you.

The Lord be with you.



C: We lift them up un - to the Lord.

Lift up your hearts.



C: It is good and right so to do.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and host in heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

### HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:  
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -  
 na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.  
 Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who  
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -  
 na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my (†) body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my (†) blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

C: A - men.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

## O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

AGNUS DEI

C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;  
have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,  
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;  
grant us your peace. A - men.

**\*\*Please Be Seated\*\***

## DISTRIBUTION

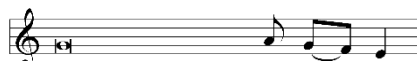
*DISTRIBUTION – Please come forward at the direction of our usher. We do practice close communion according to Paul’s guidance in 1 Corinthians 11:27: “For if anyone eats and drinks in an unworthy manner because he does not recognize the Lord’s body, he eats and drinks judgment upon himself.” Therefore, if you are not a member of the ELS or WELS, please talk to Pastor Emmons before communing. Thank you for respecting our practices.*

**\*\*Please Stand\*\***

## SONG OF SIMEON

C: Lord, now you let your servant de - part in peace ac-cord-ing  
to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have pre-  
pared be - fore the face of all people, a light to light - en the  
Gen-tiles and the glo - ry of your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.



C: And his mercy endures for - ev - er.

### CLOSING PRAYER

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it, you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

### BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord, make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (†) give you peace.



C: A - men. A - men. A - men.

**\*\*Please Be Seated\*\***

### CLOSING HYMN:

**#577**

**RISE, O LIGHT OF GENTILE NATION**



1 Rise, O Light of Gen - tile na - tions, Je - sus, bright and  
2 Know - ing you and your sal - va - tion, Grate - ful love dare  
3 May our zeal to help the hea - then Be in - creased from  
4 Sav - ior, shine in all your glo - ry On the na - tions



Morn - ing Star; Let your Word, the glad - some ti - dings,  
nev - er cease To pro - claim your ten - der mer - cies,  
day to day, As we plead in true com - pas - sion  
near and far; From the high - ways and the by - ways



Ring out loud - ly near and far, Bring - ing  
Gra - cious Lord, your heav'n - ly peace. Let us  
And for their con - ver - sion pray. For the  
Call them forth, O Morn - ing Star. Guide them

free - dom to the cap - tives, Peace and com - fort  
 sound the gos - pel ti - dings To the earth's re -  
 man - y faith - ful work - ers, For the gos - pel  
 whom your grace has cho - sen Out of Sa - tan's

to the slave, That the hea - then, free from  
 mot - est bound, That the sin - ner has been  
 they pro - claim, Let us all be cheer - ful  
 dread - ful thrall To the man - sions of your

bond - age, May pro - claim your pow'r to save.  
 par - doned And for - give - ness can be found.  
 giv - ers To the glo - ry of your name.  
 Fa - ther— There is room for sin - ners all.

Text: Herman Fick, 1822–85, abr.; tr. *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941, alt.

Tune: O DU LIEBE MEINER LIEBE (87 87 D) *Erbaulicher Musicalischer Christen-Schatz*, Basel, 1745, alt.

### WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- Every word of the Bible is inspired, inerrant, and the only source of absolute truth.
- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit form the triune God and is the only true God.
- All humans are born dead in sin and deserve eternal condemnation.
- Jesus Christ is the true God; he was conceived in Mary's womb by the Holy Spirit, adding a human nature to His divine nature.
- Only through His perfect work of redemption, which includes His perfect life, and innocent death, are all sins for all people forgiven and given credit for His perfect life.
- Only those whom the Holy Spirit, through Word and Baptism, blesses with faith in Jesus' redemptive work receive the benefit of it.
- The day is drawing near when Jesus will return to take all believers to heaven, condemn all unbelievers to eternal torment and destroy this present world.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Christmas Service Schedule** – We will have our Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 pm. Our Christmas day service will be 10:30 am with no Bible study or Sunday School on Christmas day.

**Sunday Morning Bible Study** –For the Month of December we are going to return our attention to where we left off in the book of Acts. Email any questions or topics to Pastor Emmons. Please feel free to come and go as you like; all reading is voluntary.

**Adopt a Seminarian** – Please keep our adopted Seminarian, Peter Estrem, in your prayers; You can also mail him cards and letters of encouragement to 6 Browns Court, Mankato, MN 56001. We hope to connect this student with our congregation.

**Council Members needed** – In May you have an opportunity to serve our congregation. We will be holding elections for the Vice-president and Treasurer. These are 3-year terms currently held by Mike Hanson and Greg Port (respectively.) Mike is eligible to serve one more term and Greg has asked to step down from his position. Please consider serving, your church needs you.

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