Third Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 13, 2020

Prelude
Philip Hayes, "*Pastorale*"

Confession & Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P: Most merciful God,

C: We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: Amen

Kyrie

ELW 257 "*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*"

5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. *Refrain*

Refrain
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P: We praise you, Heavenly Father, for the Advent of your Son and the promise of your kingdom. As we light the third candle of this Advent Wreath, call us to ministry in Christ, as once your prophet John called people to repentence. Grant this through Christ our Lord whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

C: Amen

Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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

[1]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 brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
[2]to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,

and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
[3]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.
[4]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.

[8]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.
[9]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.
[10]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.
[11]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.

L: Word of God. Word of Life.
C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm Anthem

George Frideric Handel, “Comfort Ye”

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

[16]Rejoice always, [17]pray without ceasing, [18]give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. [19]Do not quench the Spirit. [20]Do not despise the words of prophets, [21]but test everything; hold fast to what is good; [22]abstain from every form of evil.

[23]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. [24]The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.
L: Word of God. Word of Life.
C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

C: Glory to you, O Lord

[6]There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. [7]He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. [8]He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

[19]This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" [20]He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." [21]And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." [22]Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" [23]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.

[24]Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. [25]They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" [26]John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, [27]the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." [28]This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.
P: The Gospel of the Lord.
C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

ELW 246 "Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding"

1 Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding!
"Christ is near," we hear it say.
"Cast away the works of darkness,
all you children of the day!"

2 Wakened by the solemn warning,
from earth's bondage let us rise;
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.

3 See the Lamb, so long expected,
come with pardon down from heav'n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all, to be forgiv'n;

4 So, when next he comes in glory
and the world is wrapped in fear,
he will shield us with his mercy
and with words of love draw near.

5 Honor, glory, might, and blessing
to the Father and the Son
with the everlasting Spirit
while unending ages run!

Apostle's Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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.

Prayers of Intercession

A: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs. Lord, hear our prayer.
C: Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

A: God of majesty, we pray for the advent of your kingdom, and your reign of peace

throughout the world, when violence and war give way to healing and life and the veil of darkness is cast off your world. Lord, hear our prayer.

C: Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

A: God of grace and truth, let the light of your church shine forth in the world. Illuminate your church with the grace and love of your Son and fill your people with gratitude and faith. Lord, hear our prayer.

C: Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

A: Father in Heaven, we pray for the advent of your Son as glorious Lord of all; bringing light to those who dwell in darkness, joy to those in sorrow, hope to those in fear and despair.

End the darkness of this pandemic and bring forth your healing light. We pray especially for those we name before you Dennis, Carol, Nancy, Pastor Steve Swanson, Renee, Vicki, Rhea, … (pause for names). Lord, hear our prayer.

C: Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

A: Blessed are you, O God, Lord of all creation, we give you thanks for the ministries of our congregation, and the blessings of Concordia Church and Concordia Place and Concordia Day. Use us to make radiant the lives of those you have called us to serve. We ask this through him whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Lord, hear our prayer.

C: Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

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

C: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

Anthem

Felix Mendelssohn: "*If with all your Hearts*"

Closing Hymn

ELW 248 "People Look East"

1 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.

2 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.

3 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.

4 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.

Benediction and Dismissal

P: Go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit!
Proclaim the gospel throughout the earth!
Serve the Lord with gladness,
with deeds of justice and mercy!
C: Amen.

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

J.S. Bach, "*Von Himmel Hoch*"

Announcements

- Part 3 of our Lessons and Carols program will be released this Wednesday, December 16th at 6pm on our YouTube page! We hope you've had a chance to view the first two parts, but if not, you can find them on YouTube and also linked on the Christmas page of the church website. We hope these presentations bring you some comfort and joy this season.

- Join us virtually for our Christmas services on Thursday, December 24th and Friday, December 25th! Christmas Eve concert and service will be available on our website beginning at 4:00pm. Christmas Day service will be available on our website beginning at 10am.

- Wishing Stars is back again! This is Concordia Place's an annual tradition of providing Christmas gifts (toys, coats and winter apparel) to families who are in need. The goal is to ensure that children feel the love and warmth of the Christmas season, and relieve the burden from their parents who cannot afford to purchase gifts. In 2020, many families are struggling more than ever – it is essential that Concordia be able to provide Christmas gifts for these families. An Amazon wish list has been set up for those who would like to participate in Wishing Stars 2020 (most gifts range between $10 and $25). It's set to update so that whenever anyone purchases something, that item comes off the list. If you have any questions, please feel free to connect with Jen Phillips by email or by phone at 773-463-1600 x 402.

  Click here for the Amazon list link: https://a.co/gqbYfis (Please note: the list is set to deliver packages automatically to Concordia on Whipple where gift logistics are being managed. Gifts will benefit families at both Concordia on Whipple and Concordia on Seeley.)

- We want our children to be able to participate in Sunday worship and learn about God's love for them, even while we cannot hold classes or activities here at church. Concordia Church is mailing (monthly) resources to families that include a weekly bulletin with fun activities/lessons that corresponds to that week's readings and a coloring page for each child in the home. If you would like to receive these monthly mailings of children's faith resources, or if you have any questions, please connect with Jen Phillips at jphillips@concordiafaith.org or call

her at 773-463-1600 x 402. We also enjoy hearing from you – we invite you to connect and share how things are going for you and let us know how we can support your child's growth in faith at home.

- We appreciate your continued gifts to Concordia Church! Remember, you may give in three ways:
    1. Text-to-give: Text "Concordia" to 73256 and follow the link you receive
    2. Give online at onrealm.org/concordiafaith/give
    3. Send a check via mail to the church