



OUR REDEEMER
LUTHERAN CHURCH
GRAND PRAIRIE

You are welcome here!
**We are disciples of Jesus, growing
in Faith, Hope, and Love.**

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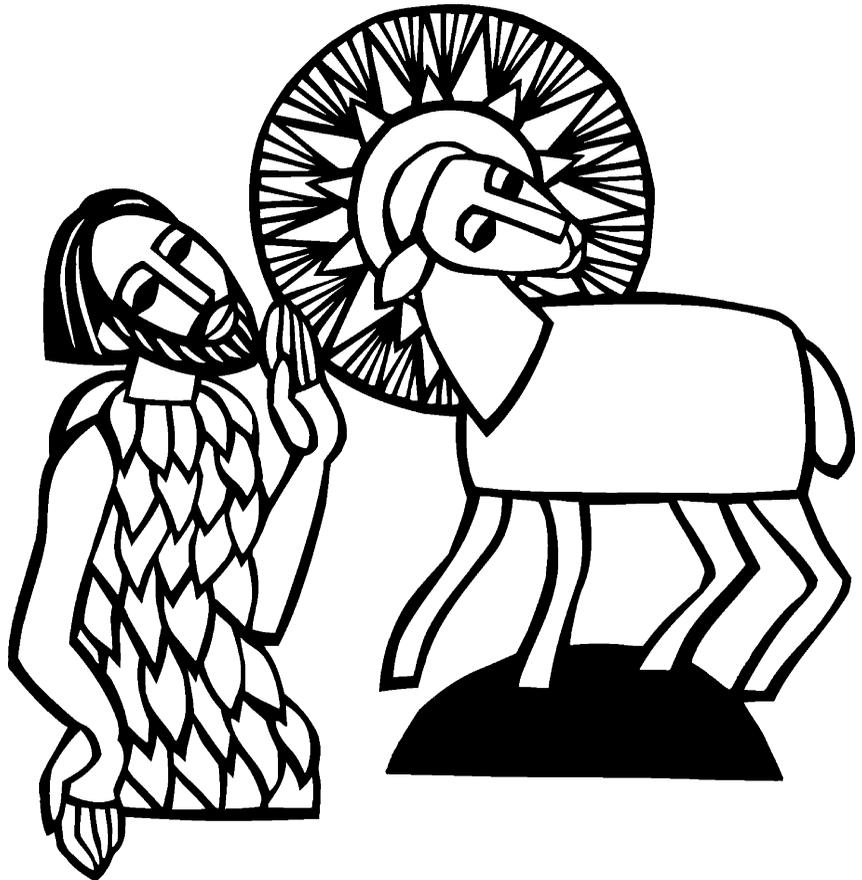
Worship Times

Sunday 10:15 am
Wednesday 7:00 pm



Pastor

Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal



December 13, 2020
Third Sunday
of Advent

Gathering

✠INTRODUCTION

“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.

✠CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

C **Amen.**

P Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires. Loving and forgiving God,

C **we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

P People of God, hear this glad news: by God’s endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God’s love, † comforted by Christ’s peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

✠HYMN OF REFLECTION – Prepare the Way of the Lord (*Sing 3x*)

Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord,
and all people will see the salvation of our God.

Text: Isaiah 40:3; 52:10. Music: Jacques Berthier and the Community of Taizé.

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✠ PRAYER OF THE DAY

A The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

A Let us pray. 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.

C Amen.

Word

✠ FIRST LESSON – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

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

²³May 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. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

✠ GOSPEL – John 1:6-8, 19-28

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

P The Holy Gospel, according to John, the first chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

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

²³He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This 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 – The King Shall Come (ELW # 260)

- 1 The King shall come when morning dawns
and light triumphant breaks,
when beauty gilds the eastern hills
and life to joy awakes.
- 2 Not as of old a little child,
to bear and fight and die,
but crowned with glory like the sun
that lights the morning sky.
- 3 Oh, brighter than the rising morn
when Christ, victorious, rose
and left the lonesome place of death,
despite the rage of foes.
- 4 Oh, brighter than that glorious morn
shall dawn upon our race
the day when Christ in splendor comes,
and we shall see his face.
- 5 The King shall come when morning dawns
and light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
come quickly, King of kings.

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✠PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P On this third Sunday of Advent, we join in prayer as we await God's salvation.

A brief silence.

P God of prophets and preachers, strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, and lay leaders. Protect Christians who are persecuted for the faith. While churches await a full return to assembly worship, empower the baptized with your faithful Spirit. Embed your word in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P God of creation, grant relief to endangered animals and plants. Protect the rain forests. Provide for those who rely on nature's rhythms for their livelihood. Train us to dwell on this earth in such a way that all people may thrive. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P God of all lands, plant in the leaders of every nation a love of justice and a commitment to serve the common good. Calm tensions in the Middle East, and bring peace where civil conflicts rage. Release child soldiers from forced service. Equip regions to rebuild cities that have been destroyed by war. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P God of exiles and wanderers, give a homeland to refugees. Provide housing for those whose dwellings have been destroyed. Protect street people from the cold and be with teenage runaways. Uphold the work of ELCA Good Gifts, Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and all disaster relief organizations. Comfort all who feel isolated from others. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P God of the sorrowing and the brokenhearted, give health to the sick, relief to medical workers, and comfort to mourners. Attend to those with lifelong illness. We beg for an end to the coronavirus and a fair distribution of the vaccines. Receive our prayers for those we name before you now, silently or aloud . . . Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P God of each one of us, we await peace and justice, health and wholeness. Sustain us as we await your coming. Hear now our unceasing prayers. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P God of sinners and saints, while facing sadness and death, we grieve; yet we offer you praise for all the saints, especially the martyr Lucy, those who have died of COVID-19, and those whose names we call out to you now. . . . At the end, gather us into the joy of your glory. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P God beyond all things, God dwelling among us now, receive these prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, who came, who comes, and who is coming now and forever.

C Amen.

✠PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

C And also with you.

✠ LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C 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.

✠ BLESSING

P The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ✠ now and forever.

C Amen.

✠ ANNOUNCEMENTS

✠ SENDING HYMN – He Came Down (ELW #253)

- 1 He came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
hallelujah forevermore.
- 2 He came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light;
he came down that we may have light;
hallelujah forevermore.
- 3 He came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
hallelujah forevermore.
- 4 He came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
he came down that we may have joy;
hallelujah forevermore.

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✠ DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

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