



CHURCH @ HOME SERVICE ORDER

Sunday, 14 December 2025

Third Sunday of Advent



INVOCATION

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

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: JOY

Bible Verse:

“The angel said, ‘I bring you good news of great joy.’” — Luke 2:10

Prayer:

Dear Jesus, you bring joy to the world.

Thank you for loving us so much.

Help us to share your joy with others. Amen.

GREETING ONE ANOTHER

O COME, O COME, IMMANUEL

**O come, O come, Immanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Rejoice! rejoice!

Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

**O come, O come, great Lord of might
who to the tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.**

Rejoice! rejoice!

Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high
and close the path to misery.

Rejoice! rejoice!
Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save
and give them victory o'er the grave.

Rejoice! rejoice!
Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! rejoice!
Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

John Mason Neale, Thomas Helmore
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LORD HAVE MERCY

(spoken)

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

GLORY BE TO GOD IN HEAVEN

Glory be to God in heaven,
peace to those who love you well;
on the earth let all your people
speak your grace, your wonders tell:
Lord, we praise you for your glory,
mighty Father, heaven's king;
hear our joyful adoration
and accept the thanks we bring.

Only Son of God the Father,
Lamb who takes our sin away,
now with God in triumph seated -
for your mercy, Lord, we pray:
Jesus Christ, most high and holy,
Savior, you are God alone
in the glory of the Father
with the Spirit: Three-in-One!

Michael Perry

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The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, your kingdom breaks into our world with healing, renewal, and joy. As we wait for the coming of your Son, give us steadfast faith, patient hope, and hearts that magnify your name. Open our eyes to see Christ's works among us and our lives to reflect his mercy. Amen.

Luke 1:46b-55

And Mary said:

'My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.

*From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me –
holy is his name.*

*His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.*

*He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.*

*He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.*

*He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.*

*He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
to Abraham and his descendants for ever,
just as he promised our ancestors.'*

**Glory to the Father and the Son
and the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be forever.**

Amen.

BIBLE READING

Isaiah 35:1-10 - God himself will come to save us

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.' Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and those the Lord has rescued

will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

After the reading

This is the Word of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

James 5:7-10 - Do not lose heart

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

After the reading

This is the Word of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 11:2-11 - Jesus and John the Baptist

Before the reading

Glory be to You, O LORD.

When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?' Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.' As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

After the reading

This is the gospel of the LORD.

Praise be to You, O Christ.

ADVENT STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in God the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth, who sent his light into the world and calls us to walk in the brightness of his love.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Promised by the prophets, he came in humility at Bethlehem, lived among us full of grace and truth, died on the cross for our sins, and rose in glory to bring us life. Risen from the dead and ascended above, we await his coming again in power and majesty, to make all things new and to bring his kingdom of peace.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who kindles faith in our hearts, renews our hope, and prepares us for the coming of the Lord. We believe that the Church is called to be a light in the darkness, a sign of God's coming kingdom, and a people watching and waiting in joy. Therefore, with faith and longing, we proclaim: *Come, Lord Jesus – our light, our life, our hope, and our peace. Amen.*

THE WORLD IS WAITING

**The world is waiting eagerly,
to see God's hidden ones.**

**The world in chains will be set free
with His daughters and His sons.
It groans in earth and sea and sky
like a woman's birth-bed pain,
and, though the Spirit blows a morning
wind, we groan again.**

**How long, our Father God, how long –
like earth and sky and sea –
how long will we, Your children groan
in deep futility?**

**For You will raise us from our lonely
grave to live and stand
as sons and daughters of Your love,
inheriting Your land.**

**Our suff'rings we can hardly bear
nor see what they may mean,
except that ours may share in His
who felt an edge more keen.
A hope we have, but cannot see
what still is out of sight:
a glory waits to touch our pain
with resurrection light.**

**Then we shall see a newborn sky,
a newborn earth below,
a newborn city, lit by love,
where nothing false will go.
And God will live with humankind -
they will be His people sure -
and He will wipe their tears away,
and death shall be no more.**

**Upon the throne the King will sit
who went down into hell
and won a Lamb's way to the tree of life
where all is well.**

**Beside a river bright and clear,
with fruit on every arm,
the tree will grow the goodly leaves
to heal the nations' harm.**

**Amen, amen! Lord Jesus, come!
Make everything anew!
Bring water in our wilderness,
change us from false to true!
Oh, may Your kingdom come,
our God, our life and hope and sun!
Oh, as in heav'n, so now by us,
may Your good will be done!**

Chester Schultz

MESSAGE

At this point you may wish to watch the Sermon.

For Church YouTube Channel ([click here](#))

For LCA Worship Resources ([click here](#))

CONFESSION OF SINS

*Let us draw near to God our Father with a true heart to confess our sins,
and ask Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.*

Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor helpless sinner, confess to You all my sins, and repent of all the evil I have done. I have deeply displeased You and deserve Your punishment in time and in eternity. But I am sorry for my sins, and I ask You, for the sake of the holy innocent sufferings and death of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us, and has given His only Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in His name He has given the right to become children of God, and has given them His Holy Spirit. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all. Amen.

LIGHT OF THE NATIONS

**Light of the nations,
sight of the blinded,
you are our freedom from every dark prison;
shine your light on the world,
shine your light on the world.**

**Light of the nations,
sight of the blinded,
you are our freedom from every dark prison;
shine your light on the world,
shine your light on the world.**

Robin Mann

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OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God,

You bring life to dry places and hope to waiting hearts. As we offer our gifts of thanks, fill us with Mary's joy and the courage to trust your promises. Use what we offer – and use us – to point others to Jesus, the One who is to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Jesus told his disciples: 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised.' So let us pray with confidence to our loving heavenly Father.

Heavenly Father, through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, you have promised to bring healing to the world. Strengthen our hearts and give us patience to wait expectantly, that we may rejoice to see your work among us. Keep us believing that Jesus is the promised Christ and that in him we have your forgiveness.

Lord, in your mercy: ***hear our prayer.***

Grant to your church, O God, faithful messengers who proclaim the good news of your coming to strengthen the weak and fearful. We pray for all who struggle with doubt, and question if Jesus is the one: that their eyes and hearts may be opened to the marvellous things that you do within and around them. Be with all who suffer for their faith, imprisoned and persecuted Christians, and those suffering discrimination. Sustain them and give them hope.

Lord, in your mercy: ***hear our prayer.***

Gracious and compassionate God, we thank you that you know what it is to suffer. Help us to remember Jesus' suffering, and to know that he is truly with us in our suffering. We pray for those who are suffering that they might find hope in you as the One who gave sight to the blind, made the lame walk, cleansed the lepers and raised the dead. Comfort all who are grieving. Heal and renew all who are burdened by illness, disability, addiction or abuse. Bring your peace and assistance to all who are struggling as they approach death, as they receive palliative care and comfort in their pain and distress.

Lord, in your mercy: ***hear our prayer.***

Loving Father, we praise you for your care and love every day and thank you for your many blessings. Please provide for those in economic distress, those who are homeless, the unemployed or underemployed, and any less fortunate. Give them hope in their anxiety and help them to trust your promises.

Lord, in your mercy: ***hear our prayer.***

Lord God, continue to bless us and this parish, that we may reflect your grace and goodness to those around us. Strengthen our faith and make us confident in your power to save. These things and whatever else you know we need, kind Father, grant us for the sake of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours
now and forever. Amen.**

BLESSING TO SHARE

May God make your hearts strong with joy and hope.
May God make your hearts strong with joy and hope.
May the Lord give you patience as you wait for his promises.
May the Lord give you patience as you wait for his promises.
May Jesus renew your faith with healing and good news.
May Jesus renew your faith with healing and good news. Amen.

IN CHRIST ALONE

**In Christ alone my heart is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song.
This Cornerstone, this solid ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought & storm.**

**What heights of love,
What depths of peace,
When fears are stilled,
When strivings cease!**

**My Comforter, my All in all;
Here in the love of Christ I stand.**

**In Christ alone who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless Babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones he came to save.**

**'Til on that Cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied,
For every sin on him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.**

**There in the ground his body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave he rose again!**

**And as he stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am his and he is mine,
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.**

**No guilt in life, No fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.**

**No power of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from his hand;
'Til he returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.**

**Stuart Townend & Keith Getty
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