

Worship Plan for Sunday, December 16, 2018

3 Advent

Third Sunday of Advent

ELW Holy Communion Setting One

Sunday, December 16, 2018

Introduction to the day

The presence of the Lord “in your midst” in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the Lord in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one “more powerful” than John, even with his winnowing fork in his hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; 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: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The reading may be announced:

A reading from Zephaniah.

The prophet Zephaniah’s message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God’s salvation is at hand.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The 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.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The 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
¹⁸as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I 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.

²⁰At 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.

The reading may be concluded:

Word of God, word of life.

The assembly responds:

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6

In your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (Is. 12:6)

²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not | be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become | my
salvation.

³**With joy you | will draw water
from the wells | of salvation. R**

⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call | on God's
name;
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that
this name | is exalted.

⁵**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done | gloriously;
let this be known in | all the earth.**

⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O | royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy | One of Israel. R

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

The reading may be announced:

A reading from Philippians.

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns, with the hope they will experience God's joy and peace.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The reading may be concluded:

Word of God, word of life.

The assembly responds:

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

The gospel is announced.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one “who is coming.” John teaches that preparation for God’s reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. 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. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.”

¹⁴Soldiers 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.”

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John 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 thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His 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.”

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel concludes:

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

For choirs, hymn writers, musicians, and off-key singing, we give you thanks, Holy One. Fill us with your song of joy. Open us to proclaim your glory in our singing, speaking, and silence. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

For the hurting places in creation; for seas and lands ravaged by natural disasters; for communities and creatures displaced by floods and droughts. Grant peace through your presence and joy in your healing. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For peace to ring out in our hearts and in our homes; for mercy and forgiveness to reign in every community; for war to cease and hunger to end. Give us this joy now, Holy One. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those who are oppressed; for soldiers and veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and their families; for neighbors who have no access to medical care; for those who are ill and those who mourn (*especially*). Fill them with your peace. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For foster families opening their homes; for grandparents raising grandchildren; for single parents struggling to make ends meet; for expectant parents who now grieve. Give strength and comfort, Holy One. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In thanksgiving for preachers and teachers who have guided us on the way. Bring us with them to rejoice eternally in you. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2018 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.