

Worship Guide December 20, 2020

You may feel that you are nothing but a small pebble dropped into the ocean. But what if your ripples could reach around the world? They can, more than you realize.



Pastor: We begin in the name of the triune God, Father, Son (†) and Holy Spirit. May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord.

C: Amen, let it be so.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P: Last Sunday we lit the candle of joy. We light it and the candles of hope and peace again as we remember that Christ will come again and bring us everlasting peace and joy.

(the first three candles are lit)

P: The fourth candle of Advent is the Candle of Love. Its light is meant to remind us of the love that God has for us.

C: Jesus shows us God's perfect love. He is God's love in human form.

P: Love is patient, love is kind and envies no one.

C: Love is never boastful or conceited, rude or selfish.

P: Love is not quick to take offense, it keeps no records of wrongs, it does not gloat over other people's troubles, but rejoices in the right, the good, and the true.

C: There is nothing that love cannot face, there is no limit to its faith, to its hope, to its endurance. Love never ends.

P: We light this candle today to remind us of how God's perfect love is found in Jesus.

(Light the Fourth Candle)

HYMN:

O Come, O Come Immanuel

CW 23

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

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel, shall come to you, O Israel.

**Oh come, O Root of Jesse free, Your own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save, and bring them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain**

**Oh, 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**



CONFESSION OF SINS AND PROCLAMATION OF FORGIVENESS

P: Most merciful God ...

C: We confess that we are by nature held in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We find ourselves failing to love you with our whole heart and loving others 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.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

P: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who does wondrous things . (Psalm 72: 8) The most wondrous of all being God's entry into our world in Jesus Christ, "not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." So be assured of the forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.



OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 35:1-6

The wilderness and the dry land will be glad. The desert will rejoice and blossom like a rose. ²It will blossom abundantly, and there will be great joy and singing. Lebanon's glory will be given to it, it will be excellent like Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make feeble knees firm. ⁴Tell those who have a fearful heart, "Be strong. Do not be afraid. Look! Your God will come with vengeance, with God's own retribution he will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be cleared. ⁶The lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy. Waters will flow in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.

EPISTLE LESSON: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

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

GOSPEL LESSON: JOHN 1:19-28

¹⁹This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, "I am not the Christ." ²¹ And they asked him, "Who are you then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" "No," he answered. ²² 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?" ²³ 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." ²⁴ They had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ So they asked John, "Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?" ²⁶ "I baptize with water," John answered. "Among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸ These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where

John was baptizing.

MEDITATION TEXT: Matthew 5: 14-16 ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket. No, they put it on a stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶In the same way let your light shine in people's presence, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

It's a Wonderful Life When You Influence More Lives Than You Realize



CONFESSION OF FAITH: (NICENE CREED)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

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.



P: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Through his holy prophets, he promised a King to bring light to those living in darkness and in the shadow of death. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever.

CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS

Our Communion Practices:

Close Communion: Guided by God's word we believe that the Lord's Supper is an expression of faith and confession. Therefore we ask that only members of the WELS or her sister synods would commune with us. If you have any questions please talk to the pastor.

DISTRIBUTION

CLOSING 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

HYMN:

Now Sing We Now Rejoice

CW 34

**Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heaven our voice;
He from whom joy streameth poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth the sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!**

**Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to Thee
Cheer my wearied spirit, o pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit, blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!**