

THE ORDER FOR OUR WORSHIP

PRELUDE - "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"
setting by Donald Johns.

(please be seated)

HYMN 331 - we sing, standing

ADVENT WREATH ~ 3rd SUNDAY

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Dear friends in Christ, on this Third Sunday in Advent, we are invited to rejoice in the Lord, for He is near. In anticipation of the joy of Christmas, we light the third candle on the Advent wreath, recalling that joy is one of the surest signs of God's presence among us.

Lord Jesus, our hearts are full of joy, for You are near. **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You come with the Good News of salvation for Your holy people. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, the power of Your love brings us healing and forgiveness. **Lord, have mercy.**

May Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive your sins, and bring you to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**O come, Thou 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.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON *(bulletin back page)*

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

PSALM 86 - we sing, see insert

SECOND LESSON *(bulletin back page)*

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

page 173 - **ALLELUIA VERSE** - all standing

GOSPEL *(bulletin back page)* - all standing

Before, all shout: **Glory to you, O Lord!**
 After, all shout: **Praise to you, O Christ!**

HYMN 345 - we sing as indicated, seated

1 - all **2 - all**
3 - men **4 - women**
5 - all

SERMON

NICENE CREED - hymnal, last page
all standing

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

all may kneel
 Response: **Hear our prayer!**

OFFERTORY

During the gathering (10:30) the Parish Choir sings "Come, Emmanuel, Come" by Besig.

page 177 - **SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT**

page 178 - **SANCTUS**

LORD'S PRAYER

page 179 - **WORDS OF OUR LORD SHARING OF PEACE**

page 180 - **AGNUS DEI**

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SACRAMENT

During the Distribution we sing HYMNS 333 and 338

All are invited to commune who have been baptized and instructed in the Faith; who repent of their sins; who are committed to Christ and to the mission of his church; and who believe with us that we receive and share our Savior's Body and Blood in, with, and under the bread and the wine of the Sacrament - which gives us His forgiveness and makes us one Christian family.

All who commune, kindly sign your names in our Communicant Register, which is located

on the narthex shelf along side our Guest Register.

page 182 - **POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE** - all standing

page 183 - **POST-COMMUNION COLLECT**

page 183 - **BENEDICTION**

HYMN 349 - we sing, standing

POSTLUDE - "Wake, Awake, For Night Is Flying" tune *Wachet Auf*, setting by *Walter*.

NEWS AND NOTES

Thank you to Karen Smith for hosting Coffee Hour this morning.

Last Sunday Here

Attending: 146 Offering: \$4,214

This Week Here

Wed - 1:30 PM - Bible Study
 - 7:00 PM - Bell Choir
 - 7:45 PM - Parish Choir

Helping hands would like to reach out to our homebound church members with a gift of homemade Christmas cookies! Would you be able to contribute 1-2 dozen? If so, please deliver them to the church office by Wednesday December 18th! If you would be available to assist in delivering them, please call or text Sally Schrumm at 203-710-0753 so we can see what and where it best fits your schedule. Thank you!

Christmas Eve Services will be held at 7 PM & 10 PM (candlelight service).

A WORD ABOUT THE LESSONS

The Coming of Jesus Enables Us to Rejoice The Third Sunday in Advent has traditionally been called by the Latin word *Gaudete*, meaning "Rejoice!" For as you are called to repentance, so also are you urged to rejoice in the coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ. By His own cross, He has accomplished salvation for you; "he has cleared away your enemies," "taken away the judgments against you" and come to reign in your midst. Indeed, He rejoices over you with gladness and song (Zeph. 3:15-17)! Therefore, even from prison St. Paul encourages us to "rejoice in the Lord always," knowing that the peace of God will guard and keep us in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:4, 7). We find an example and encouragement in the case of John the Baptist. As he languishes in prison, he calls upon Jesus and is strengthened by the Word of the Gospel that he receives. The same good news is preached to you, by which all things are made new and even "the dead are raised up" (Luke 7:22). Do not be offended by the cross, therefore, but let your life be one of prayer and thanksgiving (Luke 7:23; Phil. 4:6).