

## THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 9 & 12, 2021

*The Lord is coming! Rejoice!*

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**Opening Hymn** .....8, "Come, O Precious Ransom, Come"

**Order of Service (From Supplement)** ..... Gathering Rite on the Word of God, Page 11

**Prayer of the Day:** Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

### FIRST LESSON

**Psalm of the Day**.....Psalm 130 (page 114)

### SECOND LESSON

**Verse of the Day:** Alleluia. *I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.* Alleluia.

### GOSPEL LESSON

**Hymn of the Day** ..... 7, "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

**SERMON**..... "Rejoice!" Zephaniah 3:14-17

**Apostles' Creed** ..... Page 20

**Prayers/Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn** .....14, "Arise, O Christian People"

**Closing Prayer/Benediction**

**Closing Hymn** ..... 6, "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"

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### FIRST LESSON: Zephaniah 3:14-17

**Zephaniah refers to believers with the loving terms of Daughter of Zion, Israel, Daughter of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, and Zion. The realization of our sinfulness may cause us to fear the Lord's coming, but we can rejoice because the Lord our God is with us to save us.**

*Sing out, daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, you daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD has removed the judgment against you. He has turned back your enemy. Israel's king, the LORD, is in your midst! You no longer need to fear disaster. In that day Jerusalem will be told, "Do not be afraid, O Zion. Do not give up. The LORD your God is with you as a hero who will save you. He takes great delight in you. He will quiet you with his love. He will rejoice over you with singing."*

## SECOND LESSON: Philippians 4:4-7

**Even though St. Paul was in prison and had endured many hardships, he could still rejoice and give us the encouragement to do the same. Since God's forgiveness is constant, our rejoicing will also be constant.**

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

### GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 3:7-18

**The Judgment is coming. Those who refuse to repent and continue to hold on to their sinful lives will be cut down. But those who repent rejoice in God's good news of forgiveness. This joy will show itself in lives filled with good works.**

*So John kept saying to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, "You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore produce fruits in keeping with repentance! Do not even think of saying to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' because I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the ax is ready to strike the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is going to be cut down and thrown into the fire."*

*The crowds began to ask him, "What should we do then?" He answered them, "Whoever has two shirts should share with the person who has none, and whoever has food should do the same." Tax collectors also came to be baptized. They said, "Teacher, what should we do?" To them he said, "Collect no more than what you were authorized to." Soldiers were also asking him, "And what should we do?" He told them, "Do not extort money from anyone by force or false accusation. Be satisfied with your wages."*

*The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John could be the Christ. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But someone mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Then with many other words, he appealed to them and was preaching good news to the people.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**HEAD USHERS:** Lyle Moldenhauer/Chris Zwycart; next Sunday: Don Koch

**ADVENT WREATH:** We continue lighting the candles on our Advent wreath today. The third candle we light is the Joy or Shepherds' candle. It reminds us of the shepherds who were watching their sheep by night and who came to worship the Christ Child. This is the pink colored candle to signify rejoicing. The Joy or Shepherds' candle also symbolizes the sharing of the news of Christ's birth and to the joy He brings His people today.

**CALL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:** At the Call Meeting which was held last Sunday, a divine call was issued to Ms. Anna Potter of Laingsburg, Michigan, to teach Gr. 1-2 beginning with the 2022 – 2023 school year. Ms. Potter is currently teaching at Emanuel First Lutheran School in Lansing, Michigan. Ms. Potter would replace Miss Sara Wentzel whose one-year assignment here will terminate at the end of the current school year. Please keep Ms. Potter in your prayers as she deliberates her call to St. Matthew's as well as her current call at Emanuel First Lutheran.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS:** Boxes of Christmas cards are available for purchase from the "Greeting Card Corner" display in the church basement. Just pick out the boxes that you wish to purchase, complete a payment envelope, and give it to **Diane Koch**.

**CHRISTMAS SEASON SERVICES:** Christmas Eve services will be held on **Friday, December 24**, at **3:00 PM** -and- **5:00 PM**. The Christmas Day service will be held on **Saturday, December 25**, at **9:00 AM**. Our regular **9:00 AM** worship service will take place on **Sunday, December 26**. There will be a New Year's Eve communion worship service on **Friday, December 31**, at **7:00 PM**. There will be **NO** Thursday evening worship services on **Thursday, December 23**, -or- **Thursday, December 30**.

**SEMINARY CHORUS CHRISTMAS CONCERT:** Join the Seminary Chorus for their annual Christmas concert on **December 12 (TODAY)** at **3:00 PM** and **7:00 PM** in Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's auditorium. The **3:00 PM** (central) service will be streamed live and recorded at <http://livestream.com/WLSLive>.

**WLA CHRISTMAS CONCERTS:** The WLA Sacred Christmas concerts are scheduled for **Monday, December 13**, at **7:00 PM** -and- **Tuesday, December 14**, at **1:00 PM**. These performances will be held in the **WLA gym**. They are identical performances. All are invited!

**LUTHER PREP CHRISTMAS CONCERTS:** The Luther Prep, Watertown, Christmas concerts will be held on **Sunday (TODAY), December 12**, at **3:00 PM** -and- **Thursday, December 16**, at **10:00 AM**. Both concerts will be held in the **Luther Prep gym**. All are welcome!

**CHURCH DIRECTORY:** A copy of the current church directory is located on the table at the back of church. Please check your family's information and make any corrections needed. If all the information is correct, please place a checkmark by your name(s). This updated directory will be available sometime after the Annual Voters' Meeting in January. Thank you!

**WE THANK** the Sunday School children for their joyous hand bell music at the start of our Sunday worship service!

**WE THANK** the students in Gr. 7-8 for enriching our Sunday service with their song!

**ALTAR FLOWERS:** The flowers on the altar this week are given to the glory of God by the Kriewald Family in loving remembrance of Naomi's birthday.

## OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD

**Attendance:** Thursday: 28; Sunday: 118

**Offerings:** \$6,599.30; Thanksgiving: \$35.00

*(Budget Amount Needed Each Week: \$6,661.00)*

**Special Funds:** Debt Retirement: \$195.00; Church Refurbishment: \$25.00;  
Free-Will Offering (Children's Christmas Ornaments): \$153.00

**Memorials:** In Memory of Earl Moldenhauer: \$25.00 *(Church Refurbishment)*

## OUR WEEK AT ST. MATTHEW'S

Sunday:                   Worship Service .....9:00 AM  
Adult & Teen Bible Class/Sunday School ..... 10:15 AM

Thursday:               Communion Worship Service .....7:00 PM  
Adult Choir.....8:00 PM

Sunday:                   Communion Worship Service .....9:00 AM  
Adult & Teen Bible Class/Sunday School ..... 10:15 AM