


⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. . . .

¹⁹This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” ²²So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” ²⁸These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Acknowledgments

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We have been serving Waco and the surrounding communities since 1917.*



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2023

DIVINE SERVICE SETTING THREE
LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK, PAGE 184



Introit

Psalm 85:8–9, 12–13; antiphon: v. 7



Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,*
and grant us your sal- | vation.

**Let me hear what God the | LORD will speak,*
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints; but let
them not turn back to | folly.**

Surely his salvation is near to those who | fear him,*
that glory may dwell | in our land.

**Yes, the LORD will give | what is good,*
and our land will yield its | increase.**

Righteousness will go be- | fore him*
and make his foot- | steps a way.

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,*
and grant us your sal- | vation.

Collect of the Day

P 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.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11

¹The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.
⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations. . . .
⁸For I the LORD love justice;
I hate robbery and wrong;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹Their offspring shall be known among the nations,
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge them,
that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.
¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my soul shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to sprout up before all the nations.

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.



Rejoice greatly, O daughter of | Zion.*
Shout aloud, O daughter of Je- | rusalem.
Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;*
righteous and having sal- | vation.
Blessèd is he who comes in the name | of the Lord.*
From the house of the Lord we | bless you.

Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all
circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do
not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies, ²¹but test
everything; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.
²³Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely,
and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful; he will
surely do it.

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

John 1:6–8, 19–28

- P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.



THIRD SUNDAY
OF ADVENT

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