

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024

Order of Worship: Holy Communion, Setting Four

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Congregational responses are printed in bold type.

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PRELUDE & BELLS *We observe a moment of silence for prayer and meditation.*

WELCOME

Blessed be the Kingdom...now and forever **and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

We stand OPENING HYMN

#266

“All Earth Is Hopeful”

v1 only

✠BRIEF RITE FOR CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS OF SINS✠

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to you, that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against you by thought, word, and deed. We flee for refuge to your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring your grace, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Silence is kept for reflection and personal confession.

O God, our heavenly Father, **we confess that we have grievously sinned against you in many ways; not only by outward transgressions, but also by secret thoughts and desires which we cannot fully understand, but which are known to you. We repent and are sorry for our offenses, and we ask of your great goodness to have mercy upon us, for the sake of your dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to forgive our sins, and graciously to help our infirmities. Amen.**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on you, and has given his only son to die for you, and for his sake ✠ forgives you all your sins. To all who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become children of God and bestows on you his Holy Spirit. On the other hand, I declare to the impenitent and unbelieving, that so long as you continue in your impenitence, God has not forgiven your sins, and will surely visit your iniquities upon you if you do not turn from your sinful ways and come to repentance and faith in Christ before the day of grace is ended.¹ **Amen.**

¹Reclaim: Lutheran Hymnal for Church and Home, Introductory Edition (Minneapolis: Bronze Bow Publishing, 2006)

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Jesus Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen. *Acolyte lights two purple & one pink candle.*

✠HOLY COMMUNION✠

APOSTOLIC GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

LITANY *Kyrie Eleison* Lord, Have Mercy!



☩ In peace, let us pray to the Lord. ☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



☩ For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



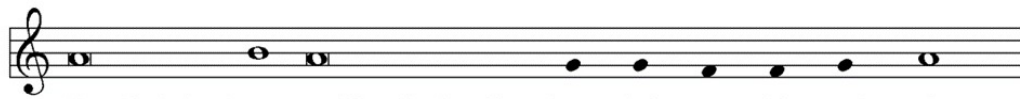
☩ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



☩ For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. ☩ Lord, have mer - cy.



☩ Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. ☩ A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

WORD

Next Steps Weekly Memory Verse: MATTHEW 11:10

I am sending my messenger before you, who will prepare your way before you.

We sit FIRST READING ZEPHANIAH 3:14-20

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The 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. ¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷ The 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 ¹⁸ as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹ I 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. ²⁰ At 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 Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSE & MEDITATION: ISAIAH 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation;

I will trust, and will not be afraid,

**for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.**

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

⁴ **And you will say in that day:**

Give thanks to the LORD, call ^l on his name;

make known his deeds among the nations;
proclaim that his name is exalted.

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

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

SECOND READING PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, 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 supplication 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.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

We stand. GOSPEL VERSE: JOHN 6:68

p151

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL READING: LUKE 7:18-28

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples ¹⁹and sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ²⁰When the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?'" ²¹Jesus had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. ²³And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ²⁴When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who put on fine clothing and live in luxury are in royal palaces. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ²⁸I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

The Gospel of the Lord **Praise to You, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

#254

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

tune #445

We sit. SERMON

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Proclaim
Pre-Christians

We stand. PROFESSION OF FAITH Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the + resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*means whole, entire Christian

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

For the Church, the world, for one another, and for the sake of all people, let us pray to the Lord.

A brief silence

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gifts you lavish upon us in Jesus! Thank you for every blessing you grant in this sin-damaged and death-shadowed world. Thank you for your peace that passes human understanding and endures past human malice. Whatever our circumstances, give us hearts filled with joy and hope. Give us grace to thank you for Jesus, and to lead others to the joy of knowing him.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make your Church beautiful with faithfulness, holiness, and joy. May its love for Jesus gladden many hearts. Let your persecuted Church rejoice in knowing you are near. Let their gentleness be known to everyone, even their tormentors. Guard all our minds and hearts in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn your face toward those whom it is easy to ignore: prisoners, refugees, and people in mental institutions, nursing homes, or homeless shelters. Help us to shed the light of your love upon them through acts of simple human kindness. Help us to speak your word of peace, forgiveness, and salvation to them through our words of encouragement and mercy.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless the people of this congregation. We pray for our mission to develop fully devoted followers of Jesus; to support Solid Rock our mission in action; and that you send us adults for baptism. Let us be a people in whom your Word is fulfilled: “Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. He will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.”

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make the leaders of every nation acknowledge your justice, and govern in obedience to it. Let faithfulness spring up from every human heart, and your righteousness look down from the sky. Strengthen, protect, and guide our military, first responders, and aid workers. Show them your steadfast love and direct their deeds in righteous pathways. Bring the blessing of peace to us all.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Help all who suffer to turn to Jesus, who made the deaf hear, the blind see, and the lame walk. We especially pray for: {List}. Give them grace to not worry about anything, but lift their needs to you by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. Grant your peace to them and all who love them, and guard their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, as we await the coming of your Son in glory, we also anticipate reunion with our beloved dead. We pray especially for the families of {List}. Help us comfort all who grieve. Make us gentle, joyful, and steadfast in love. And we pray: rejoice over your people with gladness. Renew us in love. Exult over us with loud singing. Remove from us all sin and evil, so that we will not bear their reproach. Bring us, with all whom Jesus has redeemed, into your everlasting home, where we shall rejoice in your goodness forever.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all these things; for all we lift before you in the silence of our hearts; and for everything that you know we need, we pray in the name and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and commend into your mighty and merciful hands. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also, with you.**

We briefly greet those in our row with the words "Peace be with you."

OFFERTORY SONG *Giving back to God*



First- and second-time guests are not expected to give a monetary offering; your Connection Card and your presence this morning are your gifts. Safe, secure & easy electronic giving is available on our website stpeterhallettsville.org/giving or by scanning this code.

We stand #284

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

v3 only

3 What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

if I were a wise man I would do my part;

yet what I can give him--give my heart.

Blessed are you, O Lord, our God, king of the universe. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

♩ The Lord be with you. ♪ And al - so with you.

♩ Lift up your hearts. ♪ We lift them to the Lord.

♩ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

♪ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary . . . and join their unending hymn:

♪ Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:

Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

You are indeed holy . . .

In the night in which he was betrayed, . . . Do this for the remembrance of me.

All honor and glory are yours . . . now and forever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

We sit. INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Communion is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ present and received in, with, and under the bread and wine. All who are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and who believe the Lord's words "This is my body given for you" and "This is my blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins" may receive Communion. Young children, not yet receiving Communion, may receive a blessing.

(Matt 26:26ff, Mark 14:22ff, Luke 22:19ff, 1 Cor. 11:24ff)

Communion administration occurs in a continuous fashion at the Communion rail. The ushers will guide you to the rail. To receive the elements, extend your hand, palm up, to the ministers. White grape juice is available in the center of the trays. For those unable to consume either bread or wine, the Church affirms the Lord's full presence in each element alone. Once you have received the elements, return to your seat by the side aisles. If you do not desire to receive Holy Communion, you may remain seated.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Lamb of God"

p154 John 1:29



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

We stand POST-COMMUNION BLESSING, SONG, & PRAYER
May the true body and blood...keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

#242

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten

vv1,4

1 Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.
4 Let the heights of heav'n adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing;
pow'rs, dominions, bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring
evermore and evermore.

Let us pray... Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

#248

“People, Look East”

ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH
100 North Promenade, Hallettsville, Texas 77964
(361) 798-2808 www.stpeterhallettsville.org

Our mission is Christ's mission – "I will build my church"
by developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

COFFEE TIME IS OPEN ON DEC 29TH

++++If you would like to bring snacks there is a signup sheet in the kitchen++++

Wednesday, Dec 18th Advent Services 6:00 pm Potluck Meal; 7:00 pm Service (*Forgiveness & Healing*)

Please keep Jack Conaway & Jennifer Martin in your prayers as they will be united in marriage on Saturday, Dec 21st.

Tuesday, Dec 24th 4:00 pm & 11:00 pm Christmas Eve Services

Wednesday, Dec 25th 9:00 am Christmas Day Service

Sunday, Dec 29th 9:00 am Lessons & Carols Service; NO 5:00 PM Service today

Solid Rock Bingo "Let's Fiesta" One-half Hog Processed Raffle Tickets are available in the office for \$5.00. *Only 500 tickets will be sold, and you have 2 chances to win.* If you would like to donate an item to the Silent Auction, please let Kari know in the office by **Dec 16th**.

YTD (Jan-Nov '24) \$257,884.39; **EXPENSES** \$276,398.25
DIFFERENCE +/- -\$18,513.86 (*due to increased insurance rate*)

Attendance: Sunday, Dec 8: 9AM 160/5PM 7

Openings for: (2025 Flower/Radio Sponsorships are available)

St. Peter Lutheran Church Highlights
December 9, 2024

- Annual Reports are due February 1, 2025.
- Council approved new members: Please welcome Chris & Maddie Chudej and Amanda Serold.
- Council approved the 4th Quarter Benevolence.
- The 2025 Church Council Officers were selected and approved by council. President - Debbie Hopper, Vice President - Mike Woytek, Secretary - Carol Drozd, Treasurer - Kevin Sullivan.
- Council installation and New Members is January 12.

Serving This Weekend Dec 15

Sunday AM: *Assisting:* Tammy Garner

Communion Set Up: Patsy Klekar

Communion Clean Up: Martha Bludau

Organist: Denise Drozd

Ushers: Wesley McAda, Shannon DeForest, Luther Lorfing, Aaron Henke

Acolytes: Allie & Cole Kocian

Power Point Sunday: Judy Garmon

Altar Flowers given by Leroy & Mary Schroeder in celebration for a grateful year!

Additional Flowers given by: Barbara Koehn in honor our grandson, Tyler Koehn, who received his Eagle Scout Award on Dec 11th. He is the 5th immediate family member to receive this award.

Radio Ministry given by Sharon Schaefer in celebration of Rev. James Boyd's 90th Birthday

Sunday PM: *Assisting:* Daniel Drozd

Communion Clean Up: Martha Bludau

Organist: Denise Drozd

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm: Luke 1:45b-55; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45

This Week @ St. Peter

Sun Dec 15, 9:00 am Worship, 10:00 Coffee Time,

10:30 am Adult Christian Learning, 3:00 pm Nursing Home Service,

5:00 pm Worship Service

Mon Dec 16, 1:00 pm Quilting; NO Men & Women in Mission Meeting tonight

Tue Dec 17, 7:00 pm Prayer Group

Wed Dec 18, 6:00 Advent Meal, 7:00 pm Advent Service (*last one*)

Thu Dec 19, 5:00 pm Rehearsal, 7:30 pm AA/Al-Anon

Sat Dec 21, 4:00 pm Jack Conaway & Jennifer Martin's Wedding

Sun Dec 22, 9:00 am Worship, 10:00 am Coffee Time, 10:30 am Adult Christian Learning,
5:00 pm Worship

Our Prayer List:— *Requests listed 4 weeks under **Concerns For** unless otherwise requested.*

Concerns for: Margie Renger, Jerry Brown, Joseph Williams, L.A. Muehr, Johnny Draper, Amy Schiffrin, Joelle Mihalovich, Leon Koehne, Mark Hopper, Lucille Parker, Lisa Beyer, Jerry Bonewald, the Miller Family, Howard Loewe, Leroy Schroeder, Cheryl Whitley, James Kubecka, Carol Pope

Extended concerns: Jim Brandt, Edmund Koerth, Barbara Tackett, Charlotte Hartmann, Melissa Grice, Michael Drozd, Misty Fletcher Remmers, Cody Rice Jr, William Lane, Brandi Orsak, Jeffrey Morgenroth, Charlie Garmon, Carrie Besetsny, DeWayne Dixon, James Evans, Pr. John Schmidt & family (*Missionary in Ghana*)

Other Concerns: first responders (*military, law enforcement, firefighter, medical*), Safe House Church (*Hallettsville*); San Miguel (*Ft. Worth*) and Houston Oromo Lutheran Churches, President Biden; President-elect Donald Trump, our country; and those facing unrest & unemployment

Grieving Families of: Beverly Green, Larry Stillions, Elroy Tesch, Francis Christ, Bill Drozd, A.J. Kutac, Celia Ann Kruse, Milton Mika, Evelyn Lishinski, Sarah Sralik, Carl Ticken, Dorothy Ehler

Serving Next Weekend Dec 22

Sunday AM: *Assisting:* Cheryl Draper

Communion Set Up: Patsy Klekar

Communion Clean Up: Martha Bludau

Organist: Denise Drozd

Ushers: Wesley McAda, Shannon DeForest, Luther Lorfing, Aaron Henke

Acolytes: Liam Sralla & Karlie Hotz

Power Point Sunday: Judy Drozd

Altar Flowers given by Members' Poinsettias

Radio Ministry given by Leon & Carol Koehne Blessings of Jesus Christ and in memory of Landon Koehne

Sunday PM: *Assisting:* Aileen Peck

Communion Clean Up: Aileen Peck

Organist: Denise Drozd

SAVE THE DATES IN JANUARY

Sunday, Jan 12: Next Steps Class (*Baptism*)_10:30 am-3:00 pm (*lunch provided*)

Wednesday, Jan 8 Confirmation returns 6:00 pm -8:00 pm

Saturday, Jan 11 "Let's Fiesta!" Solid Rock Bingo Night

Wednesday, Jan 15 Family Faith Night returns 6:00 pm-7:30 pm

ENTRANCE HYMN (ELW) *All Earth Is Hopeful*:(ELW 266)

Text by Madeleine Forell Marshall; Music by Alberto Taule

**1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people who struggle to see
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.**

**2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";
she conceived him, "God with us,"
our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.**

**3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;
new highways opened, new protocols declared.
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!**

**4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live
in our world; he his present, in neighbors we see
our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.**

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW) *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* (ELW 254)

Text by Charles Wesley; Music by W. Walker

**1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart.**

**2 Born thy people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king;
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

CLOSING HYMN (ELW) *People, Look East* (ELW 248)

Text by Eleanor Farjeon; Music by Barry Rose

1 People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today--
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flow'r may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today--
Love, the Rose, is on the way.

3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today--
Love, the Star, is on the way.

4 Angels announce with shouts of mirth
him who brings new life to earth.
Set ev'ry peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today--
Love, the Lord, is on the way.