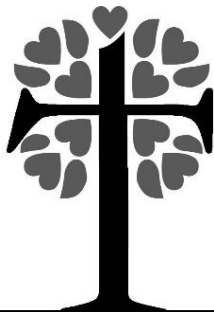


Welcome to Tree of Life Lutheran Church



December 15, 2024 ~ 3rd Sunday of Advent

Leader in regular type, **congregation in bold type**

↑ means stand as you are able

Restrooms are by the kitchen and by the Wiggle Room

Wiggle Room is available for anyone needing a brief break from worship, at the end of the piano wing of the sanctuary

WiFi is available: Look for TOL-GUEST; password is OdessaTOL1

We Gather as God's People

PRELUDE

You can use this time for quiet reflection, prayer and preparation for worship.

↑ CONFESSON AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and the +Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Trusting in the grace and mercy of Christ, who has come to us and who will come again, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one-another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy, **we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have trusted earthly powers, rather than your true power. We have clung to false comforts, rather than your true comfort. We have turned away from your will for our lives, and from our neighbors in need. In your mercy, forgive us our sins, and come to us with new life. Amen.**

A righteous branch now springs forth: It is Christ the Lord, our Savior, who brings us forgiveness, mercy and life. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

↑ HYMN “Praise The One Who Breaks The Darkness” RED HYMNAL #843

↑ 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.**

↑ ADVENT PRAYER

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe. Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness. Bless us as we light three candles on this wreath. Bring joy to our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord, for he is our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

↑ LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Sing verse 3



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

↑ PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

Let us pray: 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.**

We Hear God's Word

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

A reading from Zephaniah.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The 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.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The 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 ¹⁸as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹I 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. ²⁰At 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.

PSALM: 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, and 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 on God's name;
make known the deeds of the Lord among the nations;
proclaim that this 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

A reading from Philippians.

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. ⁷And 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.

↑ **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

RED HYMNAL pg. 205



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

↑ **GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of

them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

↑ **HYMN**

"Hark The Glad Sound"

RED HYMNAL #239

↑ **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 truly 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 with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic 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.

↑ PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

United in Christ and preparing for Christ's coming again, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

God who forgives, you call people to repent of the ways we break your righteous Law, and you offer the mercy and new life through your Son. Grant that your Church in all times and places might have the courage to proclaim both your Law and your Gospel, that all people might know the joy of your wondrous grace. Lord, in your mercy...**Receive our prayer.**

God who creates, you inspire praise in all the heavens and the earth. Grant that dormant soil might bring future bounty. Care for all creatures who face natural disaster or need. Lord, in your mercy...**Receive our prayer.**

God who leads, you show the way of true justice, freedom and peace. Inspire all the rulers, tax collectors, soldiers and civil servants in our nation and our world to serve with integrity and honor. Lord, in your mercy...**Receive our prayer.**

God who embraces, you promise to save the lame and to strengthen the faint of heart. Shower your compassion upon those who weep and those who worry, those who are afraid and those who are ashamed, and those who are in any need. We especially pray for Amanda, Annalise, Anya, Bill, Cecelia, Christine, Cindy, Clara, Dale, Danielle, Elizabeth, Erica, Gail, Grace, Kenneth, Kimberly, Marilyn, Mercedes, Pam, Patrick, Paul, Richard, Sarah and those we name with our lips or in our hearts... (*Time for personal petitions*) Lord, in your mercy...**Receive our prayer.**

God who abides, you dwell among us at Tree of Life. Fill this congregation with the willingness and the strength to do your will. Empower us to generously give of ourselves, in order that we may bear fruit for your mission in this place. Bless our bishops, Elizabeth and William; our pastor, Robbie; St. Stephen's Lutheran Church and its pastor, Sue; and Lutheran Campus Ministries and its chaplain. Mindy. Lord, in your mercy... **Receive our prayer.**

God who consoles, you bring a peace that surpasses all understanding, and you bring a life that will never die. Accept our thanksgiving for all those who now dwell in your eternal home. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy... **Receive our prayer.**

Come to us, O Lord, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, all in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

↑ PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

We Share God's Holy Meal

OFFERING

"Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow"

Spiritual

Jim Pileggi, trombone; Duane Dillard, piano

↑ OFFERTORY

RED HYMNAL #884

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost**

↑ OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together: **Creator God, you made the whole world, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our 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 our thanks and praise.

The thanksgiving continues with the preface for the day. The congregation responds:

↑ **SANCTUS**

RED HYMNAL pg. 207



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

↑ **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER AND WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

↑ **LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

↑ INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Thanks be to God.

All baptized Christians are welcome to commune. Wine and white grape juice are in the individual cups. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

COMMUNION

RED HYMNAL pg. 208



- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

HYMNS

**“Bread Of Life Our Host Our Meal”
“We Come To The Hungry Feast”**

**RED HYMNAL #464
RED HYMNAL #479**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together: **Generous God, we thank you for this gift of life, the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us and leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy and sending us into the world. Come, O Lord, and be with us to help us serve in your name. Amen.**

God Sends Us in Mission

ANNOUNCEMENTS

↑ BENEDICTION

May God be your hope on the journey, your light in the darkness, and your peace in all the days of your life. In the name of the Father, and the +Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

↑ HYMN

“This Little Light Of Mine”

RED HYMNAL #677

↑ MISSION STATEMENT

What is our Mission? **To be faithful children of God, called by grace through Christ, and sharing this gift with Middletown, Odessa, Townsend and the World.**

↑ DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live in hope.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

You may listen to the music or depart to do God's work.

Please join us for refreshments in the fellowship room after the service.

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Advent and Christmas at Tree of Life



Advent Calendars and Devotionals

Deepen your daily prayer life this season; see the sanctuary entryway for items

Donate Gifts for Families in Need

Help families through Neighborhood House; see the display in the Fellowship Room

December 15: 3rd Sunday of Advent

9 a.m. – Adult Bible Study on the Magi

10:30 a.m. – Holy Communion, with special choir anthem

December 21: Live Nativity

1 p.m. – Farm animals arrive

1:30 p.m. – Experience the Christmas story through a live re-enactment!

December 22: 4th Sunday of Advent

10:30 a.m. – Holy Communion, with special choir anthem

3 p.m. – “Blue Christmas” Worship at St. Paul’s UMC, Odessa

December 24: Christmas Eve

7 p.m. – Candlelight Communion and Worship

December 29: Service of Lessons and Carols

10:30 a.m. – Praise the newborn Savior through Scripture and song, and New Year’s blessing

January 5: Epiphany Sunday

10:30 a.m. – Holy Communion

