

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF TEMPLE CITY

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THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Rejoice at What You See and Hear

December 14, 2025



AS WE GATHER

It is certainly easy to complain. We all do it. We look around and see all those things that are not what we think they should be. We look in the mirror and we see what we lack. When John sent his disciples to Jesus, Jesus called them to rejoice in what is already present. Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, had come. He brings healing and salvation to all who will receive Him. Quite literally, these miracles are still happening all around us. Those wounded by affliction and despair find healing in Christ. The dead in trespasses and sins are raised up to life. The weak are made strong, the poor are made rich, and those with only a past are given an eternal future. What do you see and hear? Look at the world, and you will find only complaint and fear; but look to Jesus, and you will find peace that surpasses all understanding and joy without end.

✖ PREPARATION ✖

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✖ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

CONFESSiON AND ABSOLUtiON *Psalm 146:5, 7b–8a; Philippians 1:6*

Pastor: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God.

People: **The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.**

Silence for self-examination.

Pastor: Holy and gracious God,

People: **I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✖ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

✖ WORD ✖

The Advent wreath is lit with the other candles as the hymn is sung.

HYMN “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”

Hymnal page 515, verses 1 and 4

1. Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing,
And darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising
And soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
At midnight comes the cry.

4. Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, O Sun so longed for,
O'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted,
We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption
That sets Your people free!

KYRIE

Pastor: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For peace in our hearts, for peace in the church, and for peace in the world, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For mercy to forgive all our sins, for mercy to forgive the sins of one another, and for mercy for all those in need, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For grace to rule our unruly wills, for grace to prepare to receive the Lord in His Word and Supper, and for grace to be found faithful when He comes at the end of all time, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For hope to preserve us from despair, for hope to bear cheerful witness to Christ before the world, and for hope to sustain us in the hour of trial, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.



OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 35:1–10

(“Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.”)

35 ¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;
² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.
³ Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
⁴ Say to those who have an anxious heart,
“Be strong; fear not!
Behold, your God
will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God.
He will come and save you.”
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
⁶ then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
For waters break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
⁸ And a highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Way of Holiness;
the unclean shall not pass over it.
It shall belong to those who walk on the way;
even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.
⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM *Psalm 146; antiphon: v. 5*

146 ¹ Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

² I will praise the LORD as long as I live;
 I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

³ Put not your trust in princes,
 in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

⁴ When his breath departs, he returns to the earth;
 on that very day his plans perish.

⁵ Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
 whose hope is in the LORD his God,

⁶ who made heaven and earth,
 the sea, and all that is in them,

who keeps faith forever;

⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed,
 who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
 the LORD loves the righteous.

⁹ The LORD watches over the sojourners;
 He upholds the widow and the fatherless,
 but the way of the wicked He brings to ruin.

¹⁰ The LORD will reign forever,
 your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Praise the LORD!



EPISTLE *James 5:7–11*

(“Be patient . . . until the coming of the Lord.”)

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹ Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 11:2–15*

(“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

² Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴ And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.”

¹¹ Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding"

Hymnal page 345

1. Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding!
"Christ is near," we hear it say.
"Cast away the works of darkness,
All you children of the day!"

2. Startled at the solemn warning,
Let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, its sun, all sloth dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.

3. See, the Lamb, so long expected,
Comes with pardon down from heav'n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all, to be forgiv'n"

4. So, when next He comes in glory
And the world is wrapped in fear,
He will shield us with His mercy
And with words of love draw near.

*** Please stand if you are able ***

△ 5. Honor, glory, might, dominion
to the Father and the Son
With the ever-living Spirit
While eternal ages run!

*** Please be seated ***

CHILDREN / YOUTHFUL MINISTRY MOMENT

SOLO

"Christmas in the City of Los Angeles" – Song Solo by Pastor Frank Matthews

SERMON



CREED *Apostles' Creed*

People: **I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That the church may proclaim the Good News to the poor, forgiveness to the sinner, and healing to all those afflicted in body or soul, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That hope may rule our hearts against despair and that we may know joy in the midst of trials, giving thanks that Jesus Christ has come to set us free from sin, death, and all our enemies, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: That peace may calm our upset hearts and love direct our words and our actions, giving thanks that we shall be raised from this mortal life to everlasting life, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

- Pastor: That the nations and all the people may be well served by good and faithful leaders, that violence be replaced with peace among the nations, and for our good citizenship, let us pray to the Lord:
- People: Lord, have mercy.**
- Pastor: That the home may be a place of blessing and love, that marriages may be kept holy, that the lonely may find friendship, and that we may serve one another in love, let us pray to the Lord:
- People: Lord, have mercy.**
- Pastor: That we may respect life and gladly serve children and support mothers with child and those whose desire for a child has yet to be fulfilled, let us pray to the Lord:
- People: Lord, have mercy.**
- Pastor: That all those afflicted in body or soul may know healing and peace and that the grieving may be comforted in their loss, let us pray to the Lord:
- People: Lord, have mercy.**
- Pastor: That we who here be granted the fullness of what is to come when at last the dead shall be raised and the heavens and earth be made new and all the people of God reunited in the eternal dwelling place of God Most High, let us pray to the Lord:
- People: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" Hymnal page 338

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

(Matthew 6:9–13)

People: 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICAMUS

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24–26

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

HYMN “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns”

Hymnal page 348, verses 1 to 3, and 5

1. The King shall come when morning dawns
And light triumphant breaks,
When beauty gilds the eastern hills
And life to joy awakes.

3. Oh, brighter than the rising morn
When Christ, victorious rose
And left the lonesome place of death
Despite the rage of foes.

2. Not as of old a little child,
To bear and fight and die,
But crowned with glory like the sun
That lights the morning sky.

5. The King shall come when morning dawns
And light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
Come quickly, King of kings!

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 1.

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Pastoral Care:

Please contact –

Pastor Frank Matthews at: (213) 247-8838 or no1redder@gmail.com

BLESSED TO BE SERVING TODAY

Pastor: Pastor Frank Matthews

Greeter: Diane Oberlander

Reader: Christine Geltz

Musician: Christine Geltz

Ushers: Donald Lammerts, Dave Lassanke, and Craig Boehne

PRAYERS OF CARE & CONCERN FOR OUR FLC FAMILY

Pastor Scott Ganas: Please pray for Monica and her family of their unexpected loss, and the dealing with their grief, especially during this time of the year.

Judy Gunther: Please extend healing prayer for her as she has broken her hip and is in a hospital out of town.

Bob Lujan: Prayer for Christine Geltz's friend as he is dealing with many health issues.

Rachel Whitcher: Please continue to extend healing prayers for her wrist as she is recovering slowly.

Sandy Sussman: Continuing prayers of healing for this niece of former members Bruce and Lynn Bertram, who is waiting to be called home into glory.

Perry Singleton, Jan and Keith Edmunds: More prayers for Pastor Frank Matthews' friends and cousin as they continue deal with many health issues.

Patricia Caballero: We give praise and thanksgiving that she has healed nicely.

Betty Nelson: Pray for this shut-in member as she continues to deal with the challenges of aging.

Gregg Ruiz: Please pray for his family during their time of grief. Pray also for Penny (Gregg's sister-in-law), as well.

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK



Patricia Caballero

December 15

Erich Armbrust

December 20



Sunday Worship at Home

Although the Lutheran Hour no longer airs on KBRT 740 AM, you can find other airings at: lh.org/guide.

Also, listeners can hear the weekly sermons whenever and wherever they are, and daily devotions are available which come in a daily email to read or listen to. Just go to:

<https://familytalktoday.com/programguidedaily>.

Or you can listen to Lutheran Hour podcasts any time by going to:

<https://www.youtube.com/@LutheranHourMin>.

If you have a TV and can get DirectTV, Channel 377 you can view Worship Anew at: 8:30 a.m. on Sundays. This service is filmed at our Fort Wayne Seminary in Indiana.

You may also access or review the sermons online by going to:

<https://firstlutherantc.org/Media>

THIS WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN

SUNDAY TODAY – DECEMBER 14

9:30 a.m. Fellowship time

9:45 a.m. Bible Study and Sunday School

NEXT WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN

SUNDAY DECEMBER 21

9:30 a.m. Fellowship time

9:45 a.m. Bible Study and Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Board of Directors meeting

