



Immanuel
Lutheran
of Evanston

Third Sunday of Advent

“Gaudete” Sunday

**10:30 A.M. Worship with Eucharist
December 16, 2018**

Welcome!

**Immanuel Lutheran Church is a Reconciling in Christ congregation.
We welcome people of every age and size, color and culture, every sexual orientation and gender identity, socio-economic status and marital status, every ability and challenge.
We welcome believers and questioners, and questioning believers.**

We're glad God has called you here today! If you're a guest, please feel free to introduce yourself to our pastor or assisting minister. If you would, sign the guest book in the Gathering Area or fill in a guest card, and we'll be happy to send information on how you can get involved at Immanuel.

Facilities

- Our parking lot is located on the south side of the church off Sherman Avenue. You may park in the lot at any time, whether for church events or for shopping or other errands in downtown Evanston; weekdays, see the church office at the Lake St. entrance to get a parking pass. On Sundays, additional parking is available across the street at the Holiday Inn or in Lot 6 on Lake St. across from the Police and Fire Headquarters. Parking meters are free on Sunday!
- The parking lot entrance is an accessible entrance. An elevator is located just inside that door.
- Restrooms are downstairs near the meeting of the two hallways. Accessible restrooms are located near the elevator on both upper and lower levels. A gender-neutral restroom is located on the lower level by the elevator.
- We love having children in worship! There is a nursery and changing/crying room for parents to use, if needed, located downstairs. There are also changing tables in both restrooms on this level, by the elevator. An usher will be happy to direct you.
- Hearing assistance is available. Ask an usher for equipment.
- Wi-Fi is available throughout most of the building. The network is "Immanuel", password "allarewelcome". Please use the Internet responsibly!

About Our Worship

Our Sunday worship is organized around the proclamation of the Word of God and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. It has a familiar form each week, but the content changes for each service according to a calendar shared with many other Christians. Our hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, is organized so that page numbers for the liturgy are in the front part of the book, while hymn numbers are in the second part. The liturgy and hymns are printed in this bulletin, but page numbers are provided for those who wish to follow along in the hymnal.

Receiving Holy Communion

We invite you to share with us in the sacramental meal, because Christ himself invites you! At the direction of the usher, come forward if you are able, and kneel at the altar rail, starting at the walls. Receive the bread in the palm of your hand. (Gluten-free wafers are available. Just ask the pastor.) You may eat it immediately, then take the silver chalice and drink from it or, if you prefer, take a small cup from the tray. The cups in the outer ring contain wine. The cups in the center contain grape juice. As you return to your seat, place your empty cup in the trays provided at the ends of the front pews. Return to your place via the side aisles after you have communed. If you need to have Communion brought to you, please sit on the aisle, and let either the pastor or an usher know before the service that you would like to commune at your seat. If you desire a blessing but not the sacrament, you are invited to come forward with everyone else and fold your arms over your chest to indicate this.

Gathering: *The Holy Spirit assembles us as the People of God ...*

The presence of the Lord "in your midst" in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the Lord in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with his winnowing fork in his hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent, the Sunday we call Gaudete—"Rejoice!"

P: Presiding Minister **L:** Leader/Assisting Minister **R:** Reader **A:** Assembly

+ All may make the sign of the cross.

Pre-Service Music

Variations on Hymns of the Day

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

As the candle is lit, the Assembly sings v.3.

O - so - sŏ o - so - sŏ, pyong - hwa - ũi - im - gŭm
1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.
2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.
4 Come, Hope of u - ni - ty, make us one bod - y.

u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sŏ.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.

Advent Wreath Prayer

L We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath
that marks our days of preparation for 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.

A Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free,
the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy,
the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace.

A Amen.

P Let us come before God in confession.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P To you, O God,

**A we lift up our souls.
You know us through and through;
we confess our sins to you.
Remember not our sins;
remember us with your steadfast love.
Show us your ways;
teach us your paths;
and lead us in justice and truth,
for the sake of your goodness
in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

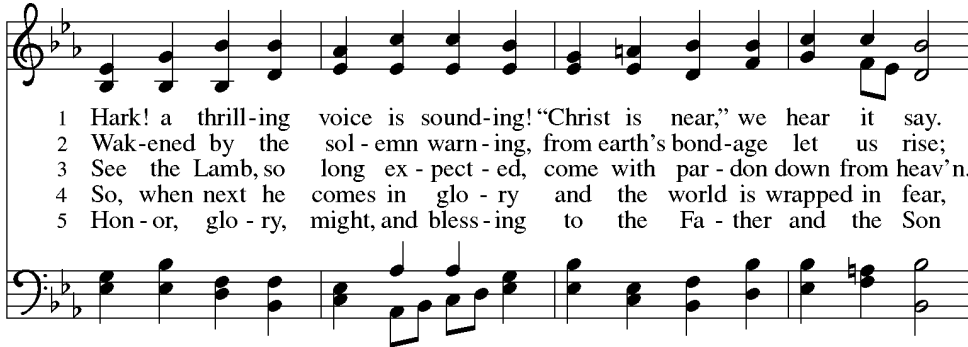
P Children of God, come with joy
and draw water from the well of salvation.
Remember the gift of baptism:
your sin is washed away in the name of + Jesus;
you belong to Christ;
you are anointed to serve.
Stand up and raise your heads!
The reign of God is near.

A Amen.

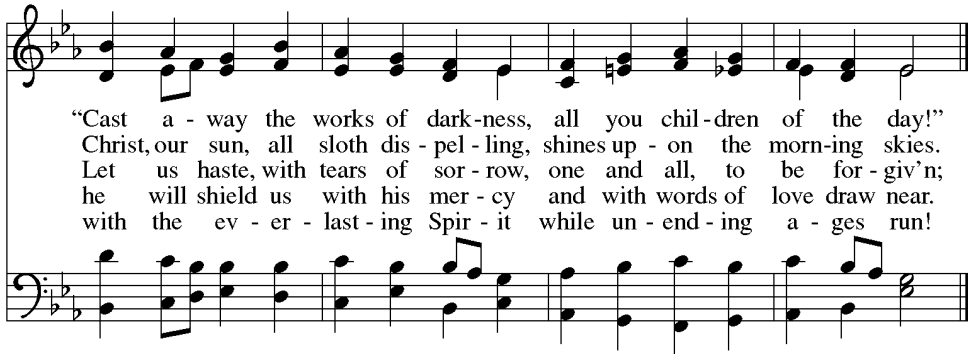
Gathering Song

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!" Hymnal 246

Please turn to face the doors. You may reverence the cross as it passes you.



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! "Christ is near," we hear it say.
2 Wak-ened by the sol-emn warn-ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
3 See the Lamb, so long ex-pect-ed, come with par-don down from heav'n.
4 So, when next he comes in glo-ry and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon-or, glo-ry, might, and bless-ing to the Fa-ther and the Son

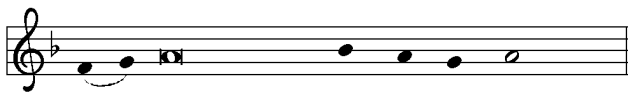


"Cast a-way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!"
Christ, our sun, all sloth dis-pel-ling, shines up-on the morn-ing skies.
Let us haste, with tears of sor-row, one and all, to be for-giv'n;
he will shield us with his mer-cy and with words of love draw near.
with the ev-er-last-ing Spir-it while un-end-ing a-ges run!

Greeting

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

A And also with you.



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 unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



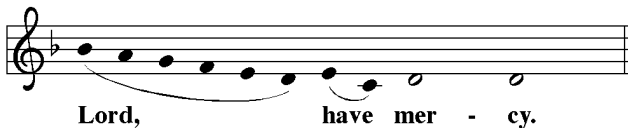
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Prayer of the Day

P 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.

A Amen.

Welcome and Announcements

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Zephaniah 3:14-20

R A reading from the Prophet 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.

R Word of God, word of life.

A Thanks be to God!

Canticle: Isaiah 12:2-6

ELW Psalm Tone 3

*The organ will play the tone, and then the refrain, and then the Assembly will sing the refrain through.
The right side of the Assembly sings lightface verses to the tone, and the left sings boldfaced verses.
All sing the refrain where indicated by "R."*

Tone:



Refrain:



In your midst is the Ho - ly One of Is - ra - el.

²Surely 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. R**

⁴And 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.**

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

Reading from the New Testament

Philippians 4:4-7

R A reading from the Letter to the Philippians.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do 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.

R Word of God, word of life.

A Thanks be to God!

The Assembly stands to greet the Good News of Jesus.



Repeat alleluia



I am sending my messenger before you. *Who will prepare your way before you.

Gospel

Luke 3:7-18

P This is the Good News of Jesus Christ according to Luke.

A 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.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

A Praise to you, O Christ!

The Alleluia of the Gospel Acclamation is sung once again. The Assembly is then seated.

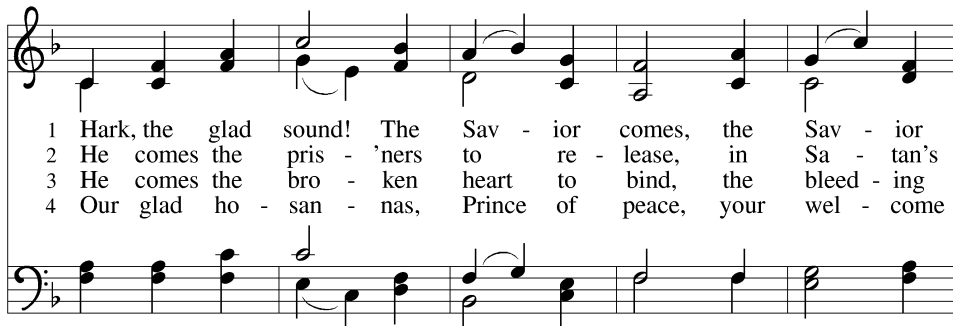
Sermon

Time of Silence

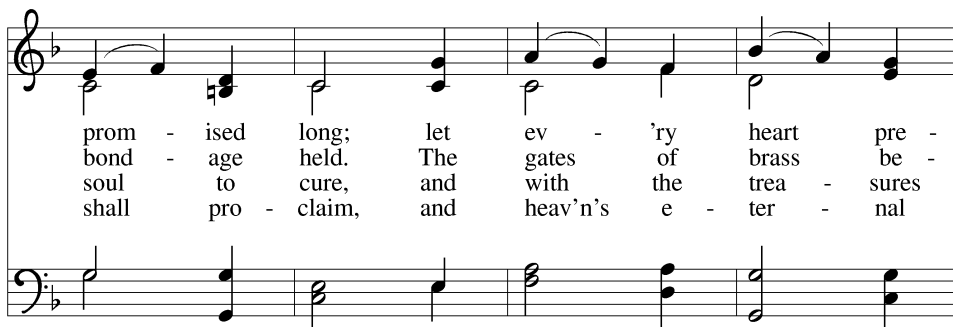
A bell will chime to begin a time of silence for reflection.

During this time, you may want to meditate on one word or phrase from the scriptures or from the sermon that stands out to you, asking the Spirit to show you how it applies to your own life.

When the bell sounds a second time, the Assembly stands to respond to the Word.



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

The Nicene Creed

L With the whole Church, let us profess our faith.

**A 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 the People

L As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation.

L For choirs, hymn writers, musicians, and off-key singing, we give you thanks, Holy One. Fill us with your song of joy. We pray for our bishops, Elizabeth and Wayne, our pastor, Keith, our president, Sara, our Council, and for all whom you have called here in your name. Open us to proclaim your glory in our singing, speaking, and in our silence. Lord, in your mercy,

A hear our prayer.

L For the hurting places in creation; for seas and lands ravaged by natural disasters; for communities and creatures displaced by floods and droughts. Grant peace through your presence and joy in your healing. Lord, in your mercy,

A hear our prayer.

L For peace to ring out in our hearts and homes; for mercy and forgiveness to reign in every community; for war to cease and hunger to end. Give us this joy now, Holy One. Lord in your mercy,

A hear our prayer.

L For those who are oppressed; for soldiers and veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and their families; for neighbors who have no access to medical care; for those who are ill and those who mourn. Empower those living with HIV/AIDS and all who are sick. We pray especially for Serena Bernstein, Margaret Carlson, Lynn Carson, Lucas Forzley, Bob Fried, Kim Gann, Jennifer Grethe, Judy Hokenson, Ron Laudert, Richard Lewis, the Nakic Family, Joe Skelton, John and Doris Strom, and those we name now aloud or in our hearts [...]. Deliver them from their struggles into havens where they can find healing and faithful companionship. Lord, in your mercy,

A hear our prayer.

L For foster families opening their homes; for grandparents raising grandchildren; for single parents struggling to make ends meet; for expectant parents who now grieve. Give strength and comfort, Holy One. Lord, in your mercy,

A Hear our prayer.

L And now, sisters and brothers, for what else shall we pray?

The petitions and thanksgivings of the Assembly, silent or spoken aloud, are invited.

L Lord, in your mercy,

A hear our prayer.

L In thanksgiving for preachers and teachers who have guided us on the way. Bring us with them to rejoice eternally in you. We remember especially this week your servant Katharina von Bora Luther. Through the witness of your saints who now rest in the Lord, inspire us in our lives of faithful service. Lord, in your mercy,

A Hear our prayer.

P Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

A Amen.

Peace

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

A And also with you.

Greet one another in the peace of Christ, saying "Peace be with you," "The peace of the Lord," or similar words. If you prefer not to shake hands, you might raise your hand in a gesture of blessing as you speak peace to your neighbors. After the Peace, all return to their seats.

Meal: *God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ ...*

Offering *An offering is gathered for doing God's mission, including the care of those in need.*

Offering Music

"Rejoice in the Lord Always" *Anonymous*

Presentation of the Gifts

"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" **Hymnal 254**

The Assembly stands and sings as the gifts are brought forward and the Table is prepared.



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

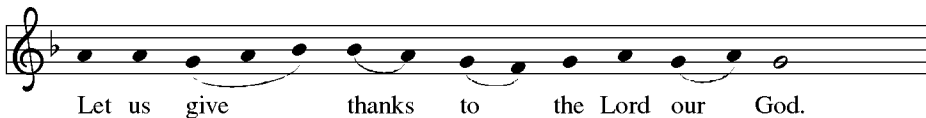
Offering Prayer

L Let us pray.

**A God of abundance,
we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation,
and with them our very lives.
Teach us patience and hope
as we care for all those in need
until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Dialogue



This Week's Commemorations

Las Posadas

Sunday, December 16, 2018

This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the *posadas*, or "lodgings," sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, d. 1552

Thursday, December 20, 2018

Born to an impoverished noble family, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age 24 she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin. Katie in turn exercised a profound influence on Martin's thinking, and was a reliable sounding board for him throughout their life together.



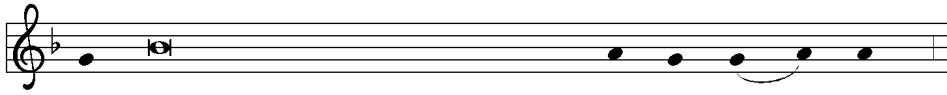
It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,



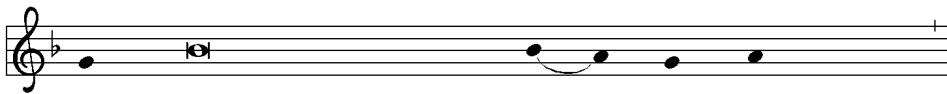
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,



al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.



You comforted your people with the promise of the Re - deem - er,



through whom you will also make all things new



in the day when he comes to judge the world in righ - teous-ness.



And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,



with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,



we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav - en 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.

Thanksgiving at the Table

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

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.

P Let us proclaim the mystery of faith. *All sing:*



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

P With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

A Come, Lord Jesus!

P Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

A Come, Holy Spirit!

P All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever. *All sing:*



A - men, a - men. A - men, a - men.

The Lord's Prayer

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray: *All sing:*



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for - give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

The Breaking of the Bread and Invitation

L God fills the hungry with good things.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.

A Thanks be to God!

Distribution of Holy Communion

*The Assembly is seated. Please come forward as the ushers direct, and as you are able.
See the inside front cover for instructions concerning Holy Communion.*

Communion Song

"Lamb of God" Hymnal 164

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. A - men.

Communion Song

"Let the Broken Ones Be Healed" [to be sung as a round]

A B
 Let the brok-en ones be healed. Let the lost be found and fed. Let the grace of God roll on. Let the
 C
 ri - ver rise and spread. Step in - to the stream with me. Let God's gra-cious pur-pose be!

The Assembly stands when directed by the Presiding Minister.

Blessing after Communion

P The body and blood of our + Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

A Amen.

Post-Communion Song

"Wait for the Lord" Hymnal 262

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Wait for the Lord". It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The lyrics are: "Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!"

Prayer after Communion

L Let us pray. Holy One, we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, harvesters of justice and righteousness, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ.

A Amen.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, Dec. 16	Poinsettia Orders Due	10:30 AM
Wednesday, Dec. 19	Holden Evening Prayer	7:00 PM
Sunday, Dec. 23	Advent 4 Worship	10:30 AM
Monday, Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Worship	9:00 PM
Friday, Dec. 28	Morehead Family Christmas Praise	7:30 PM
Sunday, Dec. 30	Lessons & Carols	10:30 AM

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Sending: *God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world ...*

Sending of Communion

P Let us pray. Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick or homebound. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

A Amen.

Sending Song

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" (printed on next page) **Hymnal 244**

Please turn as the cross passes you to face the doors through which you will be sent out in mission.

Blessing

P Go now and rejoice in the Lord always. Do not be afraid or worried about anything, but in everything trust God and pray. Bear fruits worthy of repentance, sharing what you have and being gentle with all.

And may God rejoice over you with gladness;
May + Christ Jesus renew you in his love;
and may the Holy Spirit give you peace beyond understanding
to guard your hearts and minds in Christ.

A Amen.

Dismissal

L Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

A Thanks be to God!

Postlude

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" arr. Wayne J. Kerr

Please stay for a time of fellowship immediately following the service.

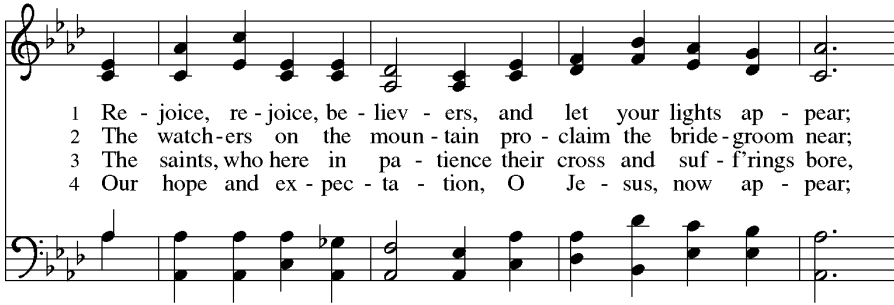
Refreshments today are provided by the Chatains.

Come enjoy one another's company and hear about all the opportunities for service and community!

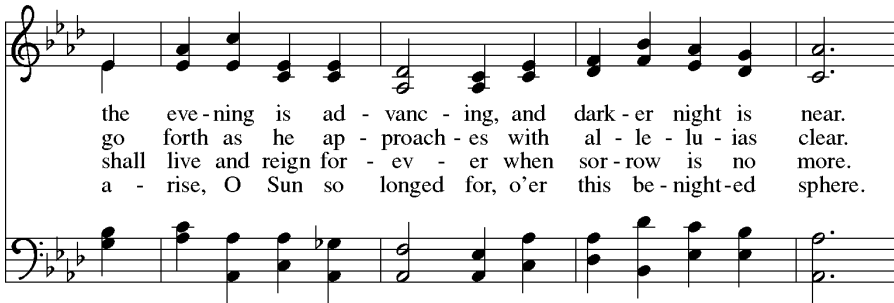
Serving in worship today...

Presiding Minister Pr. Keith Fry
Assisting Minister Kathryn Skelton
Acolyte Chris Djuric
Lector Mary Ann Kearns
Communion Minister Susan Ross
Music Director James Morehead
Organist Laurie Stivers
Table Preparation Kathryn Skelton
Communion Bread Scott Romans
Ushers Joe and Terri Simchak

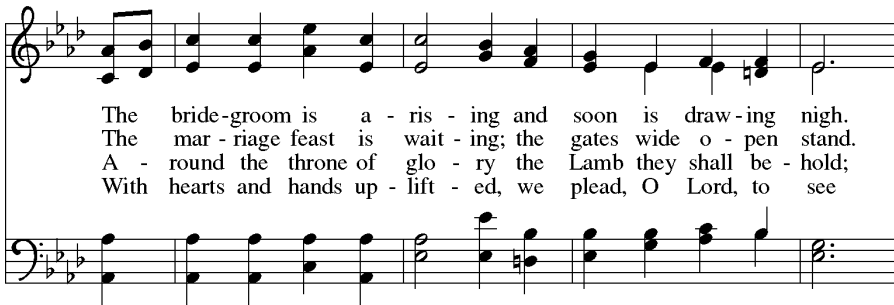
Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



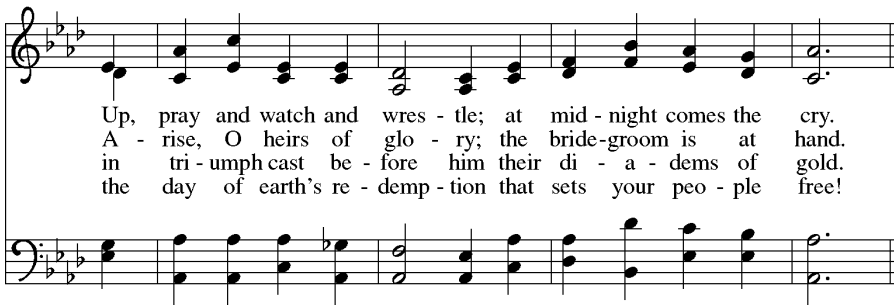
1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ring bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

The Good News Ax

It's the third week of Advent. Kids everywhere are practicing their pageant, Christmas carols are playing nonstop everywhere we go, and we are waiting for that precious babe to be born in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. But just as we are settling into that saccharin scene of Christmas sweetness, John the Baptist shatters it with his talk of an ax lying at the base of the tree and an unquenchable fire.

John's job is to give us a wake-up call: "People! The one you are waiting for is a whole lot more than just a cute little baby!" This Jesus for whom we wait is coming with power as sharp as an ax and as hot as fire, to prune away everything that holds us back from the fruit-bearing life we were born to express.

It may seem a bit too harsh and violent for our mid-Advent mood, but this ax is where things get good! Think of the things that prevent fruit from growing: guilt, shame, the hoarding of possessions, our fear that there isn't enough, the disease of sin. All of this will be chopped away and burned, making space for life to grow.

Think of the ways God chops back that which keeps us from new growth. We may be steeped in all kinds of internal poisons, prone to believing ourselves unworthy. But at the communion table, God cuts through those lies and says, "No, this is my body given for you." Through baptism we are equipped with words that can cut like a knife and truth as consuming as unquenchable fire: "You are God's child." Cleansed, nourished, and pruned, we can recognize ourselves as God's worthy and beloved children and begin bearing fruit.

Immanuel's Staff and Leadership

The Rev. Keith Fry	Pastor
Sara Krentz.....	Congregation Council President
James Morehead	Music Director
Greg Hummel	Organist
Laurie Stivers	Associate Organist
Jane Kaihatsu.....	Parish Administrator

**Immanuel Lutheran Church is a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Metropolitan Chicago Synod.
We've been worshipping God and serving the Evanston community since 1888**