

December 22, 2024



3rd Week of Advent - Love

“A SEASON OF LIGHT:

Look What It Brings!”



During Advent, we prepare for Christ’s coming, both in anticipation of his return and celebration of his birth in Bethlehem. It is a season marked by lights shining in the darkness, and one which offers hope, peace, joy, and love. But light in the world, the Light of the World shines both on the works of God and the works of sinful man. In the story of Jesus healing the man born blind, we see the effects of the Light in dramatic turns. And as we spend this season in that story—in that Light—it begs us to proclaim
“Look what it brings!”

“LOVE IS NOT BLIND”

PRESERVICE

“Love Came Down

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

LSB 343

INVOCATION

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

P: If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?,

C: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

P: This morning we are gathered in the name of our triune God to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and celebrate the Love of God poured out on us through Him who is the Light of the World. And that love was demonstrated in its fullest when our Savior left His throne in heaven and came to take on our flesh and ultimately to take on our sin on the cross. Scripture tells us that "Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." (2 Corinthians 5:14-15) But this morning we confess that while Christ's love compels us to live such a life, we are sinners who struggle to follow through. So let us come before Him confessing our sin and seeking His mercy and grace that we might love Him and live our lives for Him.

Please take a moment for silent confession

CONFESSION OF SINS

P: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved or trusted You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

P: This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:9-10) Because of God's love for you through His Son, Jesus, your sins have been paid for. You are forgiven. Now, go and sin no more! Live your life for Him and love one another as Christ has loved us.

C: Amen.

Please be seated

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

"Veni, Veni Emmanuel"

Praisemakers

NEW TESTAMENT
READING

1 Corinthians 13:1-13



If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. ⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³ So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

E: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Please stand

HYMN

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Might Gates”

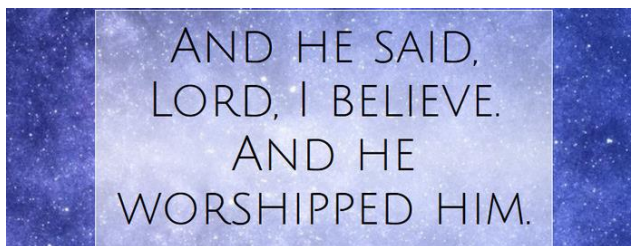
LSB 341 vs.4-5

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 9th chapter

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

GOSPEL READING

John 9:35-41



³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” ³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life T of the world to come. Amen.

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING SONG

“What Love My God”

MESSAGE

Pastor Ben Spaulding

Please stand

HYMN

“God Loves Me Dearly”

LSB 392

PRAYERS

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.

(Matthew 6:9–13)

BLESSING

*P: 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. (Numbers 6:24-26)*

C: Amen.

CLOSING SONG

“Forever Reign”

