

Central Lutheran Church

**Third Sunday in Advent
December 15, 2024**

**The Rev. Veronika Czutor, Pastor
Harold Knight, PhD, Music Director
Rachel Brown, Administrative Assistant**

Central Lutheran Church, ELCA

1000 Easton Rd., Dallas, Texas

God calls us to proclaim the Gospel and demonstrate Christ's love for all.

Please turn off your cell phone.

This service is being livestreamed to our neighbors near and far on Facebook.

Most of the sanctuary- including all leaders and worshippers- is on camera.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS MUSICAL MEDITATION

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world,
reviving creation, arriving soon.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of mercy,

C we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P God of might,

C we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

P God in our midst,

C we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

C Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

ELW 257

GATHERING HYMN

ELW 257

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. *Refrain*

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Refrain

5 O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Refrain

6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer; O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight.
Refrain

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT WREATH CANDLE

P: The season of Advent reminds us of the hope we have in the humanity of Jesus. God came to us, leaving behind the glory of heaven to be a person feeling pain, joy, loss, and love.

A: Today, we light the candle of hope, because in Jesus, heaven came to earth.

Light the first candle.

P: Advent reminds us the Prince of Peace came and lived among us. He felt stress within himself and conflict with other people, yet he chose his path of peace—peace within himself, and peace with humankind.

A: Today, we light the candle of peace because Jesus showed us how to live in peace.

Light the second candle.

P: There is joy in the anticipation of the Advent season. Just as Mary waited for the birth of her son, we count the weeks and days to celebrate Christmas. Waiting makes space for imagination and preparation, and joy fills our hearts in that waiting.

A: Today, we light the candle of joy because joy is in the promise that the holy one is coming.

Light the third candle.

GREETING

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

C And also with you.

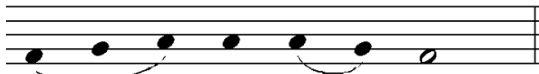
KYRIE

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



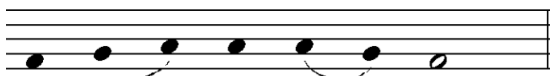
Lord, have mer - cy.

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 holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise.



Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

P 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.

C Amen.

FIRST LESSON: 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.

L Word of God, Word of Life

C Thanks be to God

PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6

Sung Responsively

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.**

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

SECOND LESSON: 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.

L Word of God, Word of Life

C Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW 253

Verses 1-3, sung by the congregation

He Came Down



1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the third chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord

READING OF THE GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

⁷ John 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? ⁸ Bear 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. ⁹ Even 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."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to

them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers 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."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John 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. ¹⁷ His 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."

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

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you O Christ

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Veronika

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

SERMON NOTES:

Lost in the Night



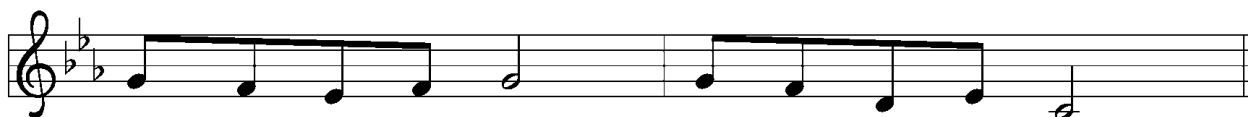
1 Lost in the night do the peo - ple yet lan - guish,
 2 Must we be vain - ly a - wait - ing the mor - row?
 3 Sor - row - ing wan - d'ers, in dark - ness yet dwell - ing,
 4 Light o'er the land of the need - y is beam - ing;



long - ing for morn - ing the dark - ness to van - quish,
 Shall those who have light no light let us bor - row,
 dawned has the day of a ra - diance ex - cel - ling,
 riv - ers of life through its des - erts are stream - ing,



plain - tive - ly sigh - ing with hearts full of an - guish.
 giv - ing no heed to our bur - den of sor - row?
 death's deep - est shad - ows for - ev - er dis - pel - ling.
 bring - ing all peo - ples a Sav - ior re - deem - ing.



Will not day come soon?	Will not day come soon?
Will you help us soon?	Will you help us soon?
Christ is com - ing soon!	Christ is com - ing soon!
Come and save us soon!	Come and save us soon!

APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.

On the third day, he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come

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.

THE PRAYERS

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Please sit or kneel for prayer. The response to each spoken petition is:

P Lord, in your mercy,
C Receive our prayer.

People with prayer needs: **Lydia** Landfair, **Norma** Ruth Myrick, **Paul** Chambers, and **Judy** Christiansen.

The prayers conclude:

P Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.
C Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace we share is a sign of God's mission of reconciliation among us and the reconciliation we have with one another in Christ Jesus. Please offer a symbol of reconciliation to one another.

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C And also with you.

THE OFFERING

*We give thanks for what God has first given us. Our ministry to the people of East Dallas is supported by your offering. An offering plate is available in the narthex after worship. You may also use our online giving through **Vanco, PayPal, or Givelify** (available in the App Store) or continue to mail your offerings to our office.*

MUSICAL OFFERING: Like a Shepherd

Sung by the choir

Refrain: *Like a shepherd he feeds his flock and gathers the lambs in his arms,
Holding them carefully close to his heart, leading them home.*

*Say to the cities of Judah: Prepare the way of the Lord.
Go to the mountain top, lift your voice; Jerusalem here is your God (Refrain)*

*I myself will shepherd them, for others have led them astray.
The lost I will rescue and heal their wounds and pasture them, giving them
rest. (Refrain)*

*Come unto me if you are heavily burdened,
and take my yoke up on your shoulders, I will give you rest. (Refrain)*

OFFERING PRAYER

P Creator God,

**C you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, 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**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts

C We lift them to the Lord.

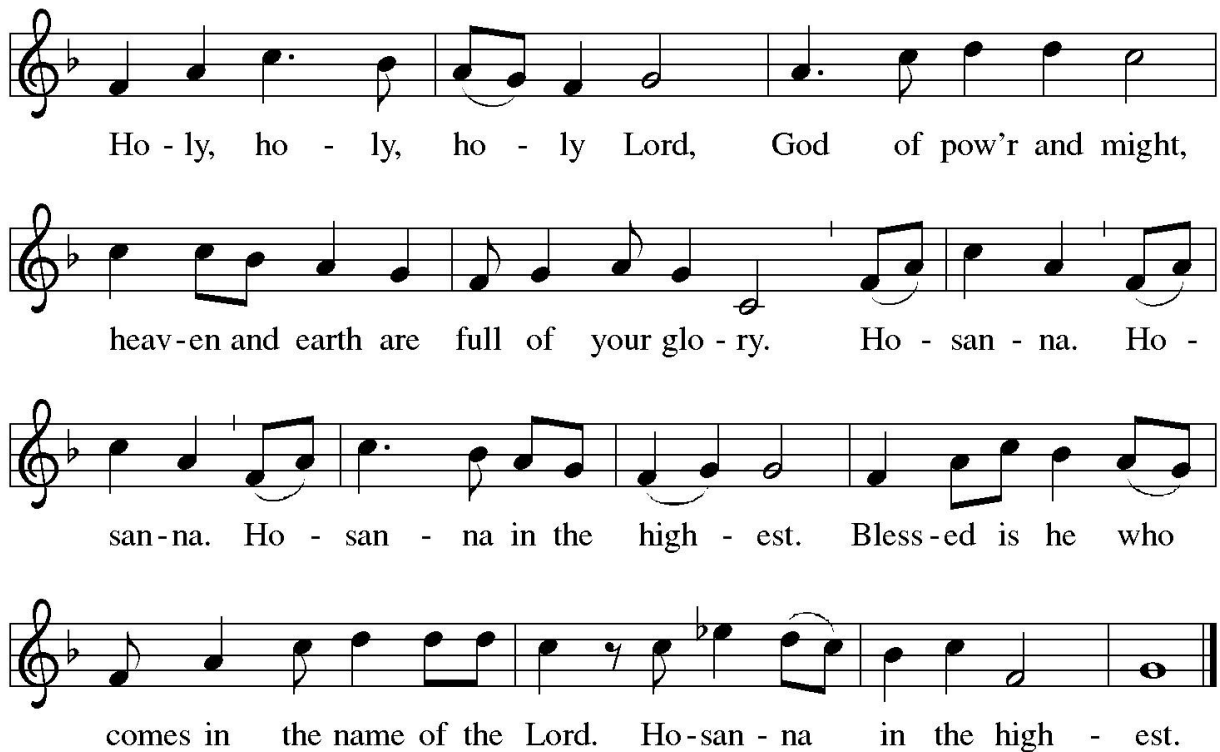
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

P It is indeed our duty and our joy . . . we praise your name and join
their unending hymn:

HOLY



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. Ho -
san-na. 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 AND WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P Holy One, ... P Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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.

C 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.

C 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.

C Amen.

THE 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

P God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

C Thanks be to God

COMMUNION

As you come forward for Holy Communion, please sanitize your hands. Communion will be distributed at the altar rail, where you may choose to kneel or stand. The bread will be placed in your hand, and gluten-free wafers are available upon request—please inform the ministers if needed. The Communion cups contain red wine and white grape juice. If you prefer to receive only the bread, let the ministers know. If you would like to receive a blessing instead of Communion, please cross your arms over your chest.

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

LAMB OF GOD

Follow the guidance of the ushers if you decide to walk up to the Altar to receive the Sacraments.

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Meditative organ music is played as the congregation receives the Holy Communion.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray... **C Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. Amen.**

BLESSING

P God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, † bless and keep you now and forever.
C Amen.

SENDING HYMN

ELW 249

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
way for God with - in, and let us all our
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C Thanks be to God

POSTLUDE

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Gathering Hymn: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Text: *Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. John M. Neale, 1818-1866

Hymn of the Day: *Lost in the Night*

Text: Nordic hymn; tr. Olav Lee, 1859-1943, alt.

Music: LOST IN THE NIGHT, Finnish folk tune

Text © 1932 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Musical Offering: *Like a Shepherd*

Text: Isaiah 40:9ff, Ezekiel 34:11, Matthew 11:28ff; Bob Dufford, SJ, b. 1943

Tune: Bob Dufford, SJ, b. 1943; acc. By Sr. Theophane Hytrek, OSF, 1915-1992, alt.

© 1976, Robert J. Dufford, SJ, and OCP

Sending Hymn: *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. Composite

Music: PUER NOBLIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

Central Lutheran Church



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Visitors, we are glad to have you with us and invite you to come again!

Pastor Veronika's Office Hours: By appointment.

Church Admin Office Hours: Monday – Friday 10 am - 2 pm

Serving in Worship Today: Usher –Anne Monson & David Hopson; Lector – Chrissy Townsley; Assistant Minister – Jeff Lowry

Midweek Advent Vespers: Come join us at Central Lutheran (on **December 18**) for **midweek Advent vespers and soup supper**, where we'll gather with our siblings from Emanuel Lutheran to prepare our hearts for Christ's arrival. On this final Wednesday, the reflection will be given by Jeff Lowry and will discuss Mary's meeting with Elizabeth. This Advent, we journey through the theme of Mary's Song—a song of deep faith, prophetic hope, and boundless love. In Mary's song, we hear her dreams, her call for justice, and her faith that God is with us. Let her words invite us into a season of expectant hope and a peace that stirs our spirits. Come be renewed as we draw near to the mystery and promise of Christ.

Brain Health Talk: Want to learn more about how to stay healthy as you age? Want to keep your brain active for as long as possible? Join us in the **Parish Hall today after worship**. We will have a lunch followed by a talk titled "Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body". The talk will be led by Jane, a volunteer from the Alzheimer's Association. All will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Advent & Christmas Schedule:

- **December 16 from 9am-Noon-** Gift wrapping at Cesar Chavez Learning Center
- **December 18 at 6:00 pm-** Wednesday Advent Vespers and Soup Suppers (in partnership with Emanuel Lutheran Church)
- **December 21 at 6:00 pm-** Las Posadas at Emanuel Lutheran Church
- **December 22-** Last Day to Order Poinsettias
- **December 24 at 7:00 pm-** Christmas Eve Worship Service
- **December 29 at 10:30 am-** Service of Lessons and Carols

Harold's Retirement/ 80th Birthday Party: Our music director, Dr. Harold Knight is retiring on Epiphany Sunday in 2025. We invite you to come to his Retirement/ 80th Birthday Party on **January 5 at noon in the Parish Hall**. Celebrate the conclusion of this 60-year career in music and education.

Annual Congregational Meeting: Our annual meeting will be on **January 26 after worship** with a chili cook off. Shape the future, then taste the flavor—vote on the 2025 budget then eat chili, and dessert!

Visitation: If you or someone you know is in need of visitation from Pastor Veronika or one of our visitation team, please contact the church office at central.lutheran.dallas@gmail.com or at 214-327-2222.

Open this QR code (or go to linktr.ee/centrallutheranchurch) to connect with us or make your offering online.



Our Prayer List: Please submit your prayer requests to the church office via phone (214-327-2222) or via email (central.lutheran.dallas@gmail.com).

PRAYERS FOR HEALING & COMFORT

For healing

Archie and Rebecca Huizenga
Linda Gourley
Ed Andrewson
Robin Friedrich
Jover Veraguas
Norma Ruth Myrick
Aba Desilus
Gail Oehler
Sylvia Chadwick
Elizabeth Cardenas
Karen Spitzer
Bonnie Knight Sato
Elizabeth Brownsted

Relationship

Friends of Janis Farrow
Sister of Julie Atkins
Friend of Anne Monson
Friend of Mary Glenn
Brother of Ruth Chambers
Mother of Alesia Pearson
Friend of Victor Chacon Montero
Friend of Beth Garcia
Mother of Mary Glenn
Daughter of Irene Hallmon
Mother of Kristy Hamlin
Sister of Harold Knight
Friend of Janis Farrow

Church Members

Don Smith	Yuvonne Muirhead
Mario Montejo	Lydia Landfair
Kris McDowell	Mary Swenson
Nancy Nulisch	Judy Christiansen
Carol Paschetag	Suzanne Schwenn
Paul Chambers	

Those We Mourn:

Marilyn Gillett
Byron Myrick, father of Alesia Pearson
Maggie Lund, friend of Janet Rashbaum