

Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church
419 Bossardsville Road
Stroudsburg, PA

Celebrating the 3rd Sunday in Advent
A Service of Word & Sacrament

12/13/2020



Before the service begins rank the words below from 1-6 in response to a poll which asked the question – If you could say in one word what you would want more in life – what would it be?

___ Freedom

___ Balance

___ Money

___ Joy

___ Peace

___ Happiness

Welcome to Christ Hamilton! Worship is much different now. Thank you for joining with us in worship in whatever manner you can. If you are at home you can find a print copy of this service available on our website at www.chrighthamilton.org. Please print a copy of this bulletin so you might follow along with the video of our service if worshipping at home: share in the responses, sing the hymns, and pray the prayers.

Know that we are praying for you, our community, nation and world as we wander the wilderness this virus has caused us to walk together. Call us and connect with us whenever you need. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Visit us on our website: chrighthamilton.org and check out our Facebook page.

Today's service: *“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.*

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS & WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Minister: In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Minister: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Minister: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Minister: Most merciful God,

**All: We confess that we are in bondage to sin
and cannot free ourselves.**

**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 you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on 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

Minister: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. 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.

All: Amen

On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's banks 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 hear - ken,
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.

GREETING

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

All: And also with you.

KYRIE



A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-vation, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. **C** A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Minister: Let us pray. . . . Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 61:1-4, 8-11

Reader: A reading from the 61st chapter of Isaiah.

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

The Advent candle is lit as all sing. .

HYMN O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**3 Oh, come, strong 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**

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

**4 Oh, come, blest Dayspring, come and cheer
 our spirits by your advent here;
 disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadows put to flight. Refrain**

PRAYER

Reader: Let us pray Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler 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 the candles on this wreath.

Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming
 of the Lord.

May He give water to all who thirst, for he is our delight
 And our salvation.

All: Blessed be God forever.

SECOND READING

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

Reader: A reading from the 5th chapter of First Thessalonians.

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all
circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do
not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test

everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

GOSPEL

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Minister: The Holy Gospel according to John, the 1st chapter.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²²Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ” as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Minister: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Prepare the Royal Highway

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain
Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

APOSTLE'S CREED

Minister: Let us confess our faith together.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again 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**

Prayers

Assisting Minister: God of power and might, shine your radiance and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need. . . . *A brief silence.*

God of preachers and messengers, you have entrusted your church with the work of proclaiming good news. Strengthen the witness of bishops, pastors, deacons, church musicians, lay leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship. Embed your word in their hearts. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

God of every living creature, you announce the year of your favor for all of creation. Extend your kindness and relief to endangered animals and plants. Strengthen the human beings who rely on the rhythms of nature to make their living. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

God of all peoples and nations, you plant us as your oaks of righteousness and ask us to care for one another. Be present with the leaders of every nation as they govern. Give them a spirit of righteousness, that your goodness and mercy is revealed through their actions. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

God of exiles and wanderers, you repair what was once destroyed. We pray for people who have been displaced from their homes by fire, flood, earthquake, or storm. Support the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran Disaster Response, and all disaster relief organizations in their recovery efforts. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. Bestow your spirit upon this congregation and empower us to comfort the people who turn to us in times of need. Make your church a place of refuge and healing. Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

God of sinners and saints, you offer joy even in the midst of our grief. We are grateful for the beloved, imperfect people whose lives testified to your radiant. Anoint all who mourn with the oil of gladness. Be with those we raise to you now from our hearts and from our lips Hear us, O God.

All: Your mercy is great.

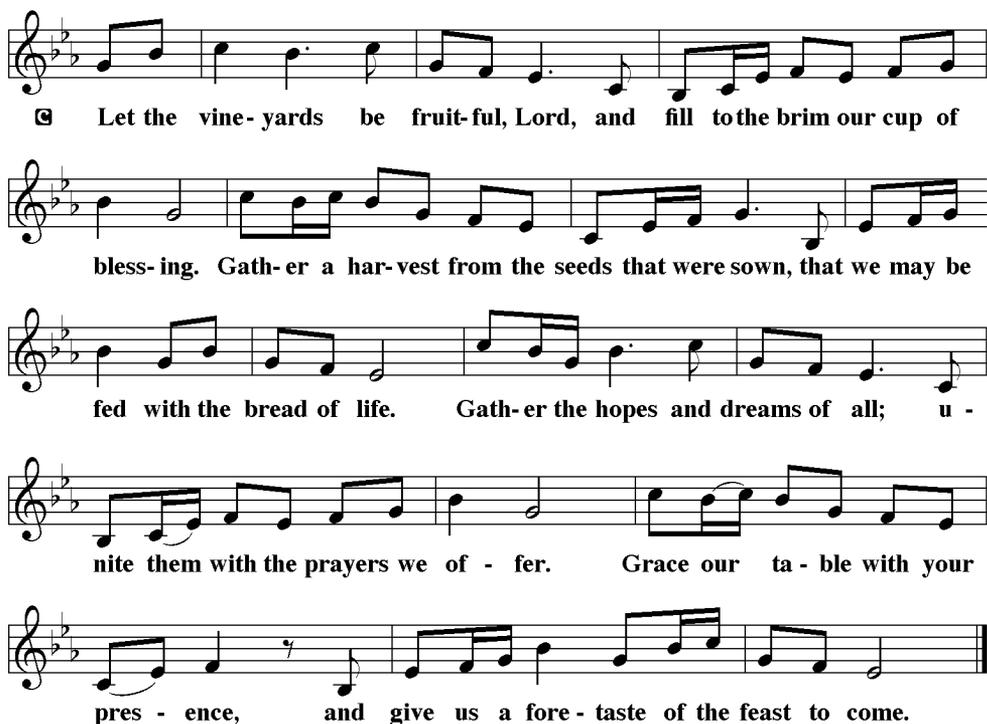
Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Offering

Offertory

Let the Vineyards



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Assisting Minister: Let us pray. . . . Blessed are you,

All: Lord our God, maker of all things.

Through your goodness

you have blessed us with these gifts.

With them we offer ourselves to your service

and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that
you have made,

for the sake of him who gave himself for us,

Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Great Thanksgiving

Minister: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

Minister: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times
and in all places offer thanks and praise to you,
O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God.
You comforted your people with the promise of the
Redeemer, through whom you will also make all
things new in the day when he comes again to judge
the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church
on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your
name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r 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.

Minister: 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

All: 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.**

Communion

*We invite all baptized Christians to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion. Ushers will bring the prepackaged wafer and grape juice to you. Please indicate how many will be taking communion to the usher and hold out the plate and the usher will place the containers on it. **Please open the packet – but do not take the wafer or juice until the pastor has indicated in order that we might commune together.***



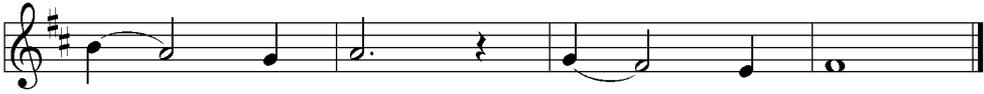
☩ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



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, grant us peace.

The minister shares with the gathered assembly.

Minster: The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

COMMUNION BLESSING

Minister: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen.

PRAYER

Assisting Minister: Almighty God, you provide the true bread from
heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that we who
have received the Sacrament of his body and blood may
abide in him and he in us, that we may be filled with the
power of his endless life, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Blessing

Minister: Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you
now and forever.

All: Amen

People, Look East

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming

trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Dismissal:

Assisting Minister: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

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POSTLUDE

Worship Leaders

Minister	Rev. Steven C. Claycomb
Assistant Minister	John Balas
Reader:	Dave Super
Cantor:	John Balas
Keyboard	Gail Haydt
Announcements	Dan Courtright

IMPORTANT: At the November council meeting, CHULC Council decided **NOT TO MOVE** into the Lighthouse. Due to the increasing COVID-19 cases and for the safety and health of all our members we will remain worshipping **OUTSIDE** through December. We will be also be looking at the updates for Monroe County on mycovid app. to track when it might be safe for indoor gathering.

A donation was made to Pocono Area Transitional Housing, in honor of our grandchildren, by Ernie and Winnie Staples.

The Altar Rose is in celebration of the birth of Makenzie Elizabeth Suarez, born November 24th. Parents Matt and Libby Suarez. Grandparents Emil and Kathy.

Please Remember in Prayer: Gary Kapostas, Joseph Polacek, Sandy Haney, Henry McCool, Diane Datesman, Ruth Ann Helriegel and Bev Scheller.

Calling all Light Stringers!: TODAY after service we could use a few helping hands to string lights around the property for Christmas. Pastor Steve has purchased thousands of twinkle lights and if anyone would like to hang around and help us put them up it would be much appreciated!

In-Person Sunday School PAUSED: Youth Sunday school will be moving to an online format starting this Sunday. The adult Sunday school class will pause their in-person class, however if you would like to join the ZOOM class on Tuesday nights at 7pm you are more than welcome. Please contact Bonnie C. at 484-824-9637

Greeter/Lector Opportunities: If you would like to volunteer to greet or read the lessons for one of our church services please call the office 570-992-4085.

Medical Equipment Needs? If you or someone you know are in need of a walker, cane, shower seat etc. please call the church office. We have many gently used items of this nature that can be utilized by those in need.

Missing Something? There are two boxes of dishes and plates that were left in the Lighthouse kitchen. If you are missing something please look in the boxes by the offering tubs. Please note: these items will be donated/recycled at the end of November if they are not claimed.

Friday Book Study: Next week (December 18th) the Friday morning book study group is beginning a new book “The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering who Jesus was and is” by NT Wright.

It is a Zoom meeting.

Anyone who would like to join the discussion can contact Jane Person at rajlperson@epix.net or call her at 570-992-5446 or 570-664-1463 so she can send you the Zoom link.

Office of the Aging Gifts: Gifts need to be wrapped with tag and dropped off at the office by December 18th. Thanks to everyone who took tags for our seniors.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING - COVID has put a bit of a damper on Christmas Caroling in people's homes this year however if you love singing Christmas carols we invite you to come out to the December community meal to sing for those families that come curbside to pick up their meals. We plan on meeting at the church at 4:15 out on the lawn in front of the Lighthouse which is where we will sing. Social distancing will be observed. Dress warmly and bring your singing voice and don't forget a mask. We should be done singing by 5:15. If interested please let Sue Butz know at 570-688-8670 or suebellbutz@gmail.com.

Instead of Christmas poinsettias we are asking that you purchase a Christmas luminaire which we will use to decorate for our Christmas Eve service. This is the last week to order, they are \$10, please get a form from our bulletin table.

Altar Flower Dates: Below are the remaining dates left to sponsor altar flowers/Hospice House:

January 10

January 31

March 21 (Lent)

If you would like to sponsor altar flowers or make a donation to Hospice House (March 21) please email Amanda chulests@gmail.com or call the church office 570-992-4085

Please look for updates on FB and the church website, www.chrighthamilton.org about cancelations of church events.

SAVE-THE-DATES:

December 20th, 4:30-5:30: will be our next free community take-out meal. Please call the church office with your name and number of meals you will be needing.

Christmas Eve Service: will be held on December 24th at 3pm and 7pm in the Lighthouse parking lot.