

SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 11, 2022

December 11, 2022
Third Sunday of Advent

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

ADVENT WREATH PRAYER: *Kathy & Penny*

We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the *candle of joy*. This should be the easy one, because joy is all around us—in the children, the lights, the music, the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations—or our memories—push joy to the side? Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share.

Loving God, we open ourselves to you, trusting that this is how you made us: you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained but must be shared. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

GATHERING SONG *He Came Down* (all verses)

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;

GREETING

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

And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957
Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen
Text and music © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM *When Will the Little King Come*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from Isaiah.

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ²it 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.

³Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
⁷the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹No 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.

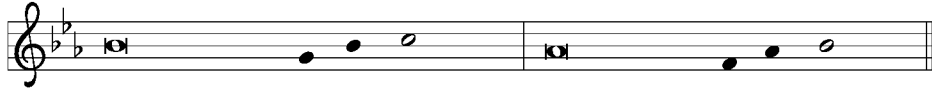
¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;

they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 146:5-10

(sung responsively between choir and congregation, beginning with the choir)



Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.
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⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob¹ for their help,
whose hope is in the¹ LORD their God;

⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that¹ is in them;**
who keeps promis-¹ es forever;

⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to¹ those who hunger.
The LORD sets the¹ captive free.

⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who¹ are bowed
down;**
the LORD¹ loves the righteous.

⁹The LORD cares¹ for the stranger;
the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way¹ of the wicked.

¹⁰**The LORD shall¹ reign forever,**
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.¹ Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

A reading from James.

*In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience
rather than discontent.*

⁷Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the
precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late
rains. ⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is
near. ⁹Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See,
the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take
the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Refrain — All

There is a long-ing in our hearts, O Lord, for you to re -
veal your - self to us. There is a long-ing in our
hearts for love we on - ly find in you, our God.

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GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

PASTOR BARB

HYMN OF THE DAY *Hark, the Glad Sound!* (all verses)

Hark, the Glad Sound!



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.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751
Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

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.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH (*Please respond.*)

P: God, in your mercy, C: hear our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERTORY *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.

OFFERING PRAYER

Eternal God,
you make the desert bloom
and send springs of water to thirsty ground.
Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money,
and make us messengers of your mercy and love
for all in need of your healing and justice.
We ask this through Christ our Savior.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

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 to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



San - to, san - to, san - to, oh Dios del u - ni - ver - so:
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of might and mer - cy,



. . . lle-nos es-tán el cie - lo y la tie - rra de tu glo - ria.
your glo - ry fills all heav-en and earth. . . . You are ho - ly, God.



Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en nom - bre del Se - ñor. . . .
. . . . Bless - ed be the Sav - ior, the one who comes in your name.



Ho - san - na en el cie - lo. San - to_e-res, oh Dios.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Traditional; English text, hymnal version
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional
English text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

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THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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

Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God, who has come to save you.

COMMUNION

Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the tray. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the pastor when you come forward.

COMMUNION SONG (sung twice)

Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name;

Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name.

Text: Dennis Jernigan, refrain of "You are my all in all"
Music: ALL IN ALL, Dennis Jernigan

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HYMNS DURING COMMUNION *Wait for the Lord* (all verses) Wait for the Lord

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community
Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
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Come Now O Prince Of Peace (all verses)

Come Now, O Prince of Peace

Ososõ, Ososõ



O - so - sǒ o - so - sǒ, pyong - hwa - ũi - im - gǔm
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 - sǒ.
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.

Text: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope
Music: OSOSÕ, Geonyong Lee, b. 1947
Text and music © Geonyong Lee

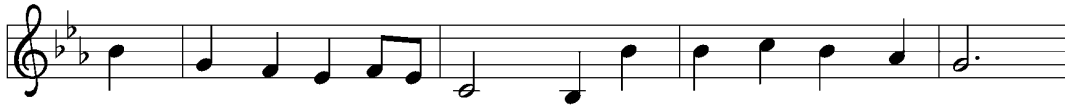
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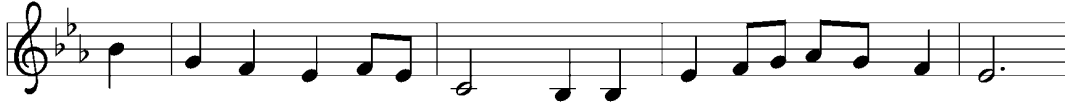
COMMUNION BLESSING

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

POST COMMUNION



1 O Lord, now let your ser - vant de - part in heav'n-ly peace,
2 Then grant that I may fol - low your gleam, O glo - rious Light,



for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:
till earth-ly shad - ows scat - ter, and faith is changed to sight;



a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,
till rap-tured saints shall gath - er up - on that shin - ing shore,



the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
where Christ, the bless - ed day - star, shall light them ev - er - more.

Text: Ernest E. Ryden, 1886–1981, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis

Music: KUORTANE, Finnish folk tune

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Faithful God,
in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ.
As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.
Guide us toward your promised future,
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you
with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor
and ✝ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *Joy to the World* (all verses)

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

SENDING IN SERVICE

Go in peace. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

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SERVING TODAY

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Organist	Doug Mummert
Head Usher	Barbara Aldrich
Acolyte	Rebekah Aldrich
Lector.....	Patricia Yetter
Securing Offering	Ilona Laney & Janice McEntire
Communion Set-Up.....	Peggi Norman
Communion Clean-Up	Peggi Norman
Communion Bread	Janice McEntire
Communion Assist	Ron Coldsmith & Janice McEntire
Attendance last Sunday	70

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the Glory of God in memory of our son, John Kindall's birthday given with love from his family.

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

Prayer requests for the following *Peggi Norman, John Fickling, Doc Ensinger, Chole, Jan Horst, Sr. Barbara Barry, Greg Steinour, Betty Amt, Tana Vance, Jim and Carole Darr, Barbara Beckner, Tracy Fredericks, Lanny Haugh, Heather Carman Shull, Jenny Barnes, Ray Rotz, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Patricia Furry, Tina Smith, Nancy Marshall, Milissa Fogle, Marie Dovey, Beth Floyd, Jean Jackson, David Johnson, Joe and Karen Wolfinger, Jennie Matthews, Patricia Yetter, Carol Locke, Linda Wepking, Frances Kramer, Darrell Veilleux, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Note:** At the beginning of each month, the Prayer Request List will start anew. If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.

For now, the offering plate will continue to be placed in the back of the church in front of the Baptismal Font. Thank you for your continuing support of the ministries of Solomon's as we join God in the work of sharing Christ's love.

Office Hours for Pastor Barb are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon or call for an appointment.

Thank you to Wayne & Marjorie Dale for donating the Christmas Tree this year.

2023 Altar Flower Chart is posted in the cloakroom off the church entryway. The cost of the two vases will be \$50.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$50.00 with the bulletin information. If you would like to save money by asking someone else to share the cost, you are welcome to do so. When you sign-up for a Sunday, you will be responsible to obtain the bulletin information for you and your friend and forward it to Kimberly.

The **Living Lutheran** December issue and **Our Daily Bread**, Jan/Feb/Mar issue is available in the pamphlet rack in the narthex.

Choir Christmas Cantata – *Celebrate The Child*, Sunday, December 18 during the 10:15 a.m. Worship Service.

Christmas Card Tree – Again this year there will be a Christmas tree in the old Sunday School room to display Christmas cards. Instead of giving out individual cards to each member, just send one card to “All Solomon’s Members.” Starting today, a box will be placed near the tree for you to place your cards. Tree Coordinators Lilly and Bill Chiado will then place the cards on the tree. The idea is that the money saved by not having to purchase so many cards can be donated to a worthy cause such as our church or your favorite charity. We hope that everyone will participate.

Communion Cards – in order to maintain accurate records, we ask that each member fill out a communion card **only once per calendar year**, at a service when you partake of Holy Communion.

Where do you see God? Solomons will use Advent this year to help open our eyes to notice God active in our lives today. Each Sunday of Advent, we’ll take time during the sermon to write our "God moments" on a piece of paper and place them in the bag by the door when we leave. On Christmas Eve, we’ll place the box under the Advent Wreath with a prayer of Thanksgiving for the many ways in which God is present. You can also call the church office to add your God moments to the box.

You are invited to Bible Study from 10 to 11 each Wednesday in the Conference Room of the Fellowship Center. This year we are praying through the Psalms. Each week is stand-alone so come when your schedule permits. Christian Ed is a life-long journey of discovering who God is and who are as followers of Jesus. Making time to learn God's Word is a mark of discipleship. Hope to see you there!

Choir Practice - Thursdays at 7:00PM.

Hurricane Relief: In response to Hurricane Ian, Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is partnering with the Florida-Bahamas, Southeastern, North Carolina and South Carolina synods, as well as Lutheran Services Carolinas, to provide both immediate and long-term support. LDR anticipates relief will include water, food supplies, tarps, cleaning materials and other needs for those who have lost or damaged homes. **Please hold the victims and relief workers daily in your prayers.** Pray that God will deliver comfort to those who mourn and strength to those working diligently to provide aid. **Prayerfully consider a generous donation to provide tangible support. Make your check out to Solomons Lutheran Church with the memo space clearly marked "Hurricane Relief." If you are using cash, clearly mark the envelope. Thank you for your care and support of God's people.**

Sunday School is in Session - Adult Sunday School classes begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Sunday School room. Children's Church will be held during morning worship and will meet downstairs at 10:20 a.m. Confirmation Class will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room in the Fellowship Center.

Power Pack Meals: The Power Pack Meal program at New Franklin Elementary School is up and running. Currently 24 students are being sent home each Friday with food to last them through the weekend. The need for donations is great. Any individual size container of vegetables, fruit, breakfast items, meals (mac & cheese, Chef Boyardee, etc.), juice pouches, Yahoo chocolate drink, 8 oz. bottle water are welcome. Please place your donation in the gray Social Ministry tote in the Sunday School room. Monetary donations are welcome, make your check payable to Solomon's with Power Pack Meals in the memo line.

Sign-up Sheets for worship assistants for 2023 are on the side table in the Sunday School room. Communion: bread, set-up, clean-up, and assistant will be on a monthly basis. If you can't commit to the entire month, please see if you can share the month with someone else. Acolytes and Lectors are on a weekly basis. If you find you can't fulfill a chosen date, please call someone to take your place. Let Kimberly in the office know so the bulletin and newsletter info stays up to date. Thank you for your commitment to help provide opportunities for meaningful worship at Solomons. Kimberly will publish the schedule for each month in the newsletter.

Bulletin Announcement Forms are in both pamphlet racks. Please submit all bulletin announcements to the office by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday for inclusion in the bulletin.

Council Minutes, Monthly Financial Statement and Committee Minutes are available in the library for anyone to read.

DECEMBER 11, 2022
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

God is active in the world, filling us with joy.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 11:2-11	Jesus and John the Baptist
Monday	Isaiah 35:1-10	The return to Zion
Tuesday	James 5:7-10	Patience in suffering
Wednesday	3 John 1:1-8	Gaius commended for his hospitality
Thursday	Nehemiah 8:9-12	Ezra reads God's law
Friday	Philemon 1:4-7	Philemon's love and faith
Saturday	Psalms 146:5-10	Praise for God's help
Sunday	Matthew 1:18-25	God is with us

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For the waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. **Isaiah 35:5-6 (NRSV)***

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Everlasting God, your work of love and mercy never ends. Help us to live with joy in our hearts through Christ Jesus, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, for this gift of food and for all your goodness that never ends, we give you thanks for the gift of Jesus to us and to all the world. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord bless you with joy each and every day.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something you really hope for?
- Where or through whom have you seen God's will active in the world?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Joy to the World



DEVOTIONS

Read: Psalm 146:5-10.

Advent is a season of hope and anticipation that may seem beyond what is real. What makes Advent real and not just a pipe dream is that we have a God who is active in the world. God has always been this way and always will be this way. This is the God of Jacob for whom God made an entire nation, Israel. This is the God who created all that is and continues to create. This is the God who gives sight to the blind, who lifts up those bowed down, and who watches over the stranger, the orphan, and the widow for all generations—past, present, and future. This is the God who is with us now through Jesus, the one who gives sight to the blind, heals the lame and the deaf, raises the dead, and brings good news to the poor (Matthew 11:5). This is the God who continues to make new things happen every day. The followers of Jesus are those who witness God's activity and give witness to what they see and hear, the witness that even death is not a defeat because we have the God who reigns forever.

Discuss: How have you witnessed God's amazing goodness, protection, and love?

Pray: **Almighty God, your greatness exceeds all we can imagine. Help us to trust in your goodness and mercy that renews us and the earth each day through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you help others find joy and live each day with hope in God?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus Christ. For this third week of Advent, light the first candle of hope, the second candle of peace, and the third candle of joy on the Advent wreath (Some use a rose-colored candle for the third Sunday as it is the symbolic color for joy). This week, we focus on the joy that God brings into our lives through Jesus.

Say: **Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord, the light of Christ that gives us hope, peace, and joy.**