

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

TRINITY
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

5:00 PM

DECEMBER 13,
2025

Jeffery Gramza
Senior Pastor

Tim Jordan
Intern Pastor

Jonathan
Lonsway
Dir. of Music

Trinity Lutheran Church - Third Sunday of Advent

3701 Jefferson Ave Midland, MI 48640

December 13, 2025, 5:00 pm

PRELUDE

Charly Sly, piano

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

People of God, come—for the wilderness is beginning to blossom, and the dry places are singing for joy. The Holy One is stirring hope where despair once lived.

**We come with longing hearts,
ready for good news,
ready for signs of life in weary places.**

Lift up your eyes! The Savior draws near in ways we do not expect—not in power or spectacle, but in healing hands, in opened eyes, in the voices of the humble declaring God's goodness.

**We come to seek the one
who brings strength to trembling hands,
courage to weak knees,
and joy to the sorrowing.**

Make straight the way of the Lord! For the ransomed shall return with singing, the redeemed shall walk the holy way, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Come, let us worship the God

BENEDICTION

Go now into this season of waiting with hearts open and lamps lit. May the God who makes deserts bloom stir joy in your spirit and courage in your steps. May Christ, the dawning Light, shine gently on your path and surprise you with grace in unexpected places. May the Spirit breathe peace into your longing, kindle hope in your watching, and carry you toward the day when all creation sings with joy.

Go in hope. Go in peace.

Go in the growing light of the Father, Son, and ✠ Holy Spirit.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

ELW #267

Joy to the World
See next page

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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LAMB OF GOD

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Communion will be distributed by coming forward and receiving the bread and wine. The center cups (white) are non-alcoholic grape juice. Upon receiving, please put empty cups in baskets provided. If you prefer gluten free, please ask Pastor who is distributing. Please proceed up the center aisle returning to your seat via the side aisles.

COMMUNION HYMNS

- Savior of the Nations, Come
- ELW #263
- O Little Town of Bethlehem
- ELW #279

who turns deserts into gardens,
fear into faith, and waiting into joyful expectation.
Let us worship with hope—
for our God is making all things new!

GATHERING HYMN

ELW #254

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

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.


Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

PRAYER OF THE DAY


Gracious God of joy and promise, you meet us in our dry and weary places and call life to bloom again. When questions rise and hope feels fragile, open our eyes to the signs of your nearness—healing, mercy, and good news for the weary. Strengthen fearful hands, steady our uncertain steps, and lead us on your way where fear cannot follow and joy finds us anew. Gather us into the hope of the one who is to come—Jesus Christ, our Savior and our song. **Amen.**

CANDLE LIGHTING SONG

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



Light three can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.



Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
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CANDLE LIGHTING

This Sunday we light the candle of joy.

GATHERING OF GIFTS FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

Generous and loving God, in this holy season of waiting, you fill our lives with promises of hope, whispers of peace, and glimmers of joy. Everything we have is a gift from your hand, and so we come with thankful hearts. Receive these offerings—the money we give, the time we offer, the love we share—as signs of our trust in you. Use them to bring light into shadowed places, comfort to the weary, and hope to all who long for good news. In Jesus’ name we pray. **Amen.**

THE 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION & LORD’S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:
**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.**

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy One, who meets us in our doubts, walks with us in our weariness, and leads us toward joy. Jesus tells us that the signs of God’s kingdom are found in healing, restoration, and good news for the poor. Trusting these promises, let us turn to God with honesty and hope.

Silence for reflection

Merciful God, we confess that we grow weary in waiting.
Our hands tremble, our knees buckle,
and our hearts grow small
in the deserts of fear, frustration, and doubt.
We confess the times we have closed our eyes
to the signs of your presence
and ignored the quiet ways your kingdom unfolds around us.
Forgive us, renew us,
and plant your joy within us.

Hear the good news: God does not wait for us to be strong before bringing healing. God comes to us now—opening our eyes to hope, our ears to compassion, our lives to new possibilities. Through Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven, your spirit is renewed, and the holy way opens before you. Walk in joy. Walk in hope. Walk in peace. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

SHARING CHRIST’S PEACE

Offer a sign of peace with those around you

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

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.

The reading is concluded:
Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.



PSALM: Luke 1:46-55

^{46b} My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
⁴⁷ my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ **for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
⁴⁹ you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
and holy is your name.
⁵⁰ **You have mercy on those who fear you,**
from generation to generation.
⁵¹ You have shown strength with your arm
and scattered the proud in their conceit,
⁵² **casting down the mighty from their thrones**
and lifting up the lowly.
⁵³ You have filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ **You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,**
to remember the promise of mercy,
⁵⁵ the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children forever.

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

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

The reading is concluded:
Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 11th chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

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.

After the reading:
The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.



SERMON

Jeff Gramza

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming

1 Lo, how a rose e’er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath
2 I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in
3 This flow’r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the
4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our hu - man

sprung! Of Jes - se’s lin - eage com - ing as
mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it, the
air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the
woe; O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who

seers of old have sung, it came, a flow’r so bright, a -
vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God’s love a - right, she
dark-ness ev - ’ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God, from
dost our weak - ness know: bring us at length, we pray, to

mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.
bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.
sin and death he saves us and light - ens ev - ’ry load.
the bright courts of heav - en and in - to end - less day.

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, sts. 1–2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845–1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876–1948, st. 4
Music: ES IST EIN ROS, *Alte catholische geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1599