

A CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

The Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2005

8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

*All who are able may stand.

Bold type spoken by the congregation

THE PEOPLE GATHER. . .

The Prelude

"While By Their Flocks"
Youth Bells

Kevin McChesney

The Welcome and Announcements

The Introit

"Beautiful Savior"
Youth Choir

Tom Fettke

The Call To Worship

Lighting the *Advent* Candle

The Prayer of Praise

(from *Isaiah 61*)

**Your Spirit is upon us, O God, because You have anointed us
to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and
to comfort all who mourn.**

This is all You doing and it is wonderful in our sight. As we pass through the portals of Your sanctuary we come bringing our hymns of praise and thanksgiving. Be pleased with our worship as we bless Your name, O God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Amen.

*The Hymn 12

"People, Look East"

*The Prayer of Confession

All-knowing God, we confess our worry and anxiety over unimportant matters. We admit the fears that make us defensive instead of loving. We guard and feed resentment over losses we have sustained and oppression we have suffered. We confess that we have been far more concerned for our own welfare than for the building up of Christ's body, the church. We look for what we can gain more than for what we can give. Re-establish your rule among us, we pray, and save us from ourselves. . .
(time for silent confession). . .

*The Choral Response

*The Assurance of Pardon

*The Gloria Patri

p. 579 in the Hymnal

*The Peace and Greeting

The peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you!**
(Please exchange this ancient greeting with worshippers seated near you.
Please stand to greet one another in the name of Christ.)

TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD. . .

The Prayer for Illumination

The *Old Testament* Lesson: *Isaiah 61:1-4,8-1* 1

p. 846 in the pew Bible

The *Psalter* Lesson: *Psalms 126*

p. 704 in the pew Bible

The Anthem

"Lift Up Your Heads"

G. F. Handel

The *Epistle* Lesson: *1 Thessalonians 5:16-24*

p. 250 in the pew Bible

A Moment With the Children

*The Hymn 9

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

AND TO MAKE PROPER RESPONSE. . .

*The Affirmation of Faith

(from “A Brief Statement of Faith”)

**In life and in death we belong to God.
Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
And the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God,
The Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.**

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.
The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,
Sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,
And binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the church.
The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles
Rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,
Engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the water of baptism,
Feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
And calls women and men to all ministries of the church.
In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage
To pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
To unmask idolatries in church and culture,
To hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
And to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
We strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
And to live holy and joyful lives,
Even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth,
Praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”**

**With believers in every time and place,
We rejoice that nothing in life or in death
Can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Prayers of the People
The Lord’s Prayer

p. 16 in the Hymnal

The Service of Offering
The Gathering of Our Gifts

The Offertory

“Heaven Is My Throne”

Dennis Eliot

*The Doxology and Prayer of Dedication
Doxology, p. 592 in the Hymnal

In our unworthiness, O God, may we yet bring worthy gifts to honor the Messiah. May the brokenhearted be led to enriching new celebrations. May the lowly among us come to know their true worth as persons chosen by you to do great things. By your mercy, may the hungry be fed not only with bread but also with opportunities to feed others. We give ourselves as your servants, for no gift is complete without personal commitment. Thank you, God, for expecting great things of us. Our spirits rejoice in the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

GO IN GOD’S NAME.

*The Hymn 31

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

*The Charge & Benediction

*Postlude

“Noel Nouvelet!”

French traditional